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AN ABSENT FRIEND.

BY SUSANNA J.

Thou art so far away from us,
We half forget thy face;
So do not wonder at our dearth
Of happiness. This spot of earth
Is now a darkened place.

Have we not read in ancient lays
That each had half a soul?
Ah, surely then those gifts of thine
And my affection might combine
In one harmonious whole!

Back to the World

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A PIECE OF PATCHWORK," "SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER," "A MIDSUMMER FOLLY," "WEDDED HANDS," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

TWO elderly gentlemen are endeavoring to persuade a young girl not to do something upon the doing of which she has set her mind. They are arguing, and she is listening with a charming show of deference, which is deceiving them.

Consequently they redouble their energy, and do their best to place before her in the blackest possible colors the results of what she desires to do. They are not without hope that gradually she is being made to see the whole matter in its true light.

When they have made an end of speaking, she says gently—

"Would you be so kind as to read me over again, Mr. Duncombe, what Mrs. Ffolliott says?"

"Oh, certainly!" says the the reverend gentleman addressed, with a slight smile and a glance at the other pleader. "Mrs. Ffolliott says:

"'I should be very thankful if you happen to know, dear Mr. Duncombe, of any gentle-mannered superior young woman who would do for a companionable maid or nurse or help for myself. I do not of course wish for a fine lady, because we are simple folk; our establishment is not large indoors, and she would have to live with my dear old housekeeper. I want somebody who can read and write really well, and who, as I don't indulge in elaborate toilettes, would be willing to help me in many other little ways which a regular lady's-maid might not care to do.'"

That is all that bears upon the subject," adds the reader.

"And," asks the young girl, "is it it your decided opinion that I should not do for the situation?"

"Pooh!" exclaims the other gentleman. "That's not the question Not do. All women do—everywhere! They can fit any situation—like hot gutta-percha—if they choose!"

"Well," says the clergyman, hesitating, "but, my dear, can you dress hair?"

"Mrs. Ffolliott's? Oh, yes! And won't she wear caps?"

"To be sure! Still, you know—excuse my persisting—but mustn't it be what do you call it?—tied up—fastened up with—thingamies—what is it?"

"Hair pins?" The young girl laughs outright at this display of masculine ignorance, and the laugh is a very clear and musical one. "Of course there will be hairpins; but they will not baffle me. I am very sorry that you are both so much against my plan. I don't see any other way of getting over the difficulty. How far did you say it is to Westray?"

"You remind me," the clergyman says, after a slight pause, "of the young couple who threw themselves on their knees before their stern parents and implored their permission to marry, and who, when it was flatly refused them, remarked quietly, 'Oh, well, we are married!'"

The other pleader, for all his scowl, thinks to himself that, if he had been the recipient of a look as wistful as the one just bestowed on his clerical friend by that young girl, he must surely have rushed forward and, casting all decorum to the four winds, have suddenly hugged her—as he was wont to do when she was a delightful little girl in pinafore.

"Do you know, child," he says cheerfully, "that there is one thing you can do for me at Westray?"

"But you promised me," she begins; and he gets his wistful look.

"Yes, yes! But you can do something for me that I'll be shot if I can ever do myself!"

"You know that I will do anything for you!" she says eagerly. "What is it?"

"You can keep your eye on that wild girl of the woods for me. Keep on knocking her ideas out of her head, and knocking yours in. You'll oblige me very much by doing that. She will take that cottage down there——"

"I know it; and, situated as I shall be, how will it be possible for me to be with her? I cannot be on terms of intimacy with her!"

"If I knew how, I could of course easily tell you! I only said, missie, Keep your eye on her."

The young girl is still look doubtfully into her old friend's face, and he is still looking, grimly affectionate, into hers, when the clergyman says—

"Then good-bye! I must go now."

"Oh," cries the young girl, "don't leave me like this! Promise me all sorts of things, Mr. Duncombe! No—better still, don't be angry with me, and give me your blessing!"

"Nonsense!" he says, flushing and frowning. "I'm not that sort of parson—you know that!" Nevertheless, after a moment's pause, he lays one hand on hers, and says [earnestly, "Yes. Peace be with you!" And, when she looks up, with moistened eyes, the smile he gives her is one of perfect sympathy.

It is more than a year now since old Sir Gideon Ffolliott of Fladden Hall, near Westray, has been gathered to his forefathers, leaving to his grandson and heir just as much as it was not in his power to will away from him—lovely Fladden itself, most beautiful and unremunerative of properties!

His non-entailed landed possessions in other counties, horses, carriages, plate, jewelry, and pictures—all personal effects indeed, with the exception of certain heirlooms—and last, but not least, the very considerable fortune willed to him by his second wife, who died childless—all these he has left to his adopted daughter.

This daughter is the child by a previous marriage of his third wife, of whom a strange thing is said—that she was able not only to make him love her during her life but to regret her when she was dead.

The will has not been contested. It was made when Sir Gideon was in full possession of his faculties; and, besides, he had, after, but left the money that had come to him through one stranger's hads to another stranger.

The young Ffolliotts had had only a presumptive right to his great wealth, and it was pretty well known that, if he had chosen to ignore it, it was because he had never been able to forgive his own son for marrying pretty penniless Alice Ray, when by marrying otherwise he might have done so much for heavily encumbered Fladden.

Nor had his heart grown any softer when on his second marriage, he himself was able to set Fladden clear from debt.

When his son died, an early victim to a life of dissipation and folly, his widowed daughter-in-law and her little boys were thenceforward greater strangers to him than ever.

He had allowed them to live at Fladden, and kept up the place for them as economically as he possibly could; for he hated it with a fierce unreasoning hate, chiefly because it must one day be Bryan's—that young Bryan for whom all men who knew him had a good word—Alice Ray's son.

For himself, Sir Gideon had preferred to live in more congenial places—at Torquay or Mentone in the winter, in the summer in London, in the Highlands, on the borders of the Thames—anywhere where there was something to do, people to be seen, and money to be spent.

And then one day the end of all things worldly came to him, and young Bryan came into his niggardly inheritance—so niggardly an inheritance that it was found impossible to keep up the old place in even the bare order in which old Sir Gideon had kept it.

There was no hesitation; Sir Bryan and his mother accepted the situation in the same courageous way in which they had accepted a great many others, and moved at once into the Red Dower House, there to economize in the best way they could.

There they have prospered fairly. Sir Bryan has become agent for the large estates of his old friend and neighbor the Earl of Beckingham. It is congenial work for him; it keeps him among his own friends, and puts a few very necessary extra pounds into his pocket.

And Fladden—charming Fladden, with its lovely views and its unfruitful soil, its ivy-covered gray-stone walls, where the swallows and martins build their nests and rustle among the thick leaves, with its long terrace, its deep, pleasant bay-windows, its old-fashioned furniture, its dignity and poverty—is to known to them no more.

Sir Bryan thinks himself fortunate to have let it for a term of twenty-one years to a retired London solicitor with an agricultural mania, a man with money who thinks he can "make something" of Fladden, and who has unhesitatingly accepted the terms which Sir Bryan's solicitor has been venturesome enough to ask, which greatly perturbs Sir Bryan.

"Good heavens, Puttlcombe," he exclaims, "that man must be a fool! I can't take his offer—Fladden isn't worth it!"

"Everything is worth what it will fetch," is the answer of the astute lawyer. "This fellow wants Fladden——"

Matters are easily settled. If one half of the county does exclaim, "Good heavens, Ffolliott!" the other half exclaims, "Well done, Ffolliott!"—and after his come-down the young Baronet is perhaps more popular than ever.

The young heiress, Mary Holt, is a much greater difficulty to contend with. It is often said of the Ffolliotts that, for all the pleasantness of their manners and the simplicity of their ways, their pride is something Luciferous!

Mary Holt has found it so. She has implored them through her solicitors and by many eloquently-worded letters to agree to what she calls a just arrangement—namely, that, as she cannot touch the capital of her money, which is left in the hands of trustees for herself and her heirs for ever, Sir Bryan Ffolliott will take—not as a gift, but as a right—until her death, three-quarters of the yearly interest thereof.

But he invariably refuses all these offers, and declines to enter into any correspondence upon the subject with her solicitors.

When she begs for at least the favor of an interview with Mrs. Ffolliott, she is told for answer that, the ante Lady Ffolliott and her daughter not having sought the acquaintance of Mrs. Ffolliott in the lifetime of her father-in-law, she prefers to remain a stranger to Miss Holt after his death.

And so the matter ends.

CHAPTER II.

"This is the Westray road isn't it?"

"Yes 'm."

"Which is the way to the Nurseries?"

"Straight on till you be a goodish bit a-past the pond. Then they'll be the kitchen gardens to the right of you; but the house itself is a good half-mile up the hill."

"I suppose they'll be somebody I can speak to at the kitchen-gardens?"

"Oh, yes, 'm! Mr. Roberts is generally there hisself, or else old Bruce."

There is a hedge between the Nurseries kitchen-garden and the road, and on the kitchen-garden side of it a young man in "flannels," with a cricket cap at the back of his glossy, smooth dark head, is stooping over a rose-bush which is there as though by accident, and is puffing great clouds of tobacco-smoke at a colony of green-flies, when suddenly he feels something tickling the back of his neck.

It is June, and various insects are abroad, so he makes a dash at the spot with his disengaged hand, and catches hold of a piece of twine.

He pulls, and the twine resists; whereupon, of course, he turns round sharply, and finds that the twine ends in a whip-lash, the whip-lash in a whip handle, the whip-handle in a small gloved hand, the hand in an arm, and so on, up by a shapely shoulder to perhaps, in his idea, the prettiest baby-face he has ever seen in his life.

So he smiles, and, though perhaps not without provocation, still with consummate impudence, says—

"What did you do that for, darling?"

"Darling!" repeats the vision. She does not blush—she does not look at all confused. She is standing up in a little donkey carriage on the other side of the hedge, the whip in one hand and the reins in the other, her hat on one side, her jacket half on, half off, and she merely looks haughtily amazed. "'Darling,' indeed!" she repeats. "Do you know, man, to whom you are speaking? Do you know that I am Miss Harvest?"

"Well, but why did you tickle the back of my neck with your whip-lash?"

"It was an accident. I only meant to twiddle it about before your face. I wanted you to look round."

"And couldn't you have called out 'Man!' or 'Sir!' or 'Hallo!' or something?"

"Another time I will. Have you any strawberries?"

"Plenty."

"Then send me a goodish many."

"Very well, I will. But what do you call 'a goodish many'?"

"Three or four punnets, full, if they are nice ones, and alike all the way down, if you please. I'm not a good housekeeper yet perhaps; but I know about fruit—so mind!"

"I'll see to it myself. Would you like anything more?"

"Yes. Say 'Ma'am' now and then, when you address me, will you? You know that that's what you should do. Some cucumbers, if you have any good ones."

"Coals to Newcastle!" observes the young man, so pleasantly that it would be difficult to be angry at his rudeness; but the baby-faced girl only looks puzzled for a moment, and then answers with dignity—

"Most certainly! Send the things at once!"

The young man is enjoying himself so

much that he does not dare even to smile, lest the smile should burst into a laugh and his entertainer vanish.

"You have not told me where I am to send the things, ma'am."

"Do you know a little cottage on the Fladden road—a cottage with honeysuckle?"

"Oh, old Drake's!" "Not old Drake's—Miss Harvest's."

"Yes; but, when old Drake was alive ——"

"I did not come here to converse with you," the young girl says stiffly. Then she nods, her speech and action contrasting oddly, sits down, and drives off.

He looks after her a while, and then suddenly bursts into a prolonged roar of laughter. When he has finished his laugh, and his chuckling, he goes in search of a person known to his world as "Roberts."

"Oh, Roberts, I want you to pick four basketfuls of particularly good strawberries, and take them, with three fine cucumbers, to old Drake's cottage! Just leave them, and say they're what Miss Harvest wanted."

"With your compliments, sir?"

"No, no—without my compliments. Just leave them, as I tell you, for Miss Harvest. You need not mention me at all. Now don't add or take away or embellish or flourish—do just as I tell you. And—er—you may as well—er—come to me if there's anything to say. Sir Bryan has nothing to do with this."

Roberts says, "Yes, sir," stolidly. He is not a brilliant man, but he has great gifts, one of which is that he can obey an order and take a message literally. When he returns, he says quietly—

"Miss Harvest would be glad, she says, of a little asparagus; but it's not to be rubbish."

Another shout of laughter from the young man in "flannels;" but Roberts does not laugh. He has to leave his regular work to cut asparagus, and walk back to old Drake's cottage with it. He feels that Sir Bryan would not be pleased at these "goings on." But the young man in "flannels" is dear to him, so he meekly obeys.

Two days afterwards Miss Harvest drives over in her donkey-carriage to settle her little account at the Nurseries.

There is nobody in the kitchen-gardens—at least, within sight—so she get outs of her carriage, ties the donkey to the gate, and walks gravely and deliberately up the pathway between two rows of fragrant currant-bushes, looking about her for somebody to speak to.

Presently the pathway ends in a little wooden shed, at the half-closed door of which she taps discreetly. A man presents himself, with a pruning-knife in one hand and a bundle of twigs in the other. He touches his forehead respectfully with the handle of the knife.

"I've come to pay for the things I had of your master," she says.

"To—to pay, ma'am?"

"Yes. I suppose you will do as well—won't you?"

He looks at her, grins, and thinks he had better call his master.

"Will he be long?"

"Oh, no, ma'am! I think he's up yonder at the stables." The man disappears.

The young girl has not very long to wait; the master is soon on the spot, alone, hat in hand, and brimful of mischief.

"Good morning. How much?" the young girl says laconically, scarcely looking at him.

"Well, suppose we say two pence for good luck," he says, a little piqued at her complete indifference, for he is well known "thereabouts" as "handsome Dick," and as a rule women evince some slight agitation when they address him. This one does not.

"Twopence!" she repeats, with widely-opened eyes.

"Well, they were very fine strawberries," he answers apologetically.

"I don't understand," she says coldly.

"I will explain. I am very glad that you liked the fruit. But we don't sell fruit here—we only grow it for our own use or for our friends."

"What," she cries—"isn't this the Nurseries?"

"Yes, it is; but that is only a foolish name for the kitchen-gardens that belong to that little red house up there behind the trees."

The young girl looks more and more astonished as he makes his explanation, and at its conclusion she is furious.

"I think," she says, after a pause, "that you have behaved in a very impertinent manner to me."

"I don't see that," he answers. "You came here and tickled the back of my neck with a whip-lash, and you peremptorily ordered me to send fruit and other things to your house. You did not ask me who I was or if it would be convenient. I did as I was told. And isn't that the whole duty of man? How was I to know you would be annoyed at my abject obedience?"

"I took you for a market-gardener," she says severely.

"Oh, did you? Well, thank you for explaining it all away so nicely. Only don't be so angry, Miss Harvest. Why shouldn't we be pleasant about it? There's no harm done!"

"No harm done! But there is—a great deal! I've eaten the things!"

"You are most heartily welcome, I am sure——"

"I don't accept presents—especially when I ask for them," she exclaims, with dignity.

"I shall be happy to beg your pardon in the most grovelling way you can think of," he answers. "I'm really very sorry for my little joke; but of course I can't take your money."

"I think you will have to take it!"

"Excuse me, I cannot—and I will not!" he says, with a rather sudden alteration of manner, for she is getting out her purse.

"You don't suppose," she says, "that I choose to accept strawberries from strangers?"

"Very well. But I don't choose to be paid for them."

"Then you should not have sent them. Cucumbers too, and a fat bundle of asparagus."

"Then, pardon me, you should not have asked for them."

"I think you are the rudest person I ever met in my whole life," the young girl says seriously, with very little heat now.

"And you are the coolest," he thinks; but all he says is, "It's a mistake. I meant it to be very funny, and I've made a null of it. You must forgive me—really you must—and just say to yourself, 'It's a mistake.'"

"It is," she says gravely. "I am always making them—always! My dear grandfather's last words were, 'Don't trust appearances.' I liked your looks so much! I shouldn't have thought you could be—horrid! When I first saw you, I thought you so handsome——"

He looks up quickly, but he finds nothing to gratify his vanity. There is not the slightest vestige of consciousness or coquetry in her face. She is not even looking at him—she is looking beyond him at the old wooden shed. Nevertheless his vanity has been aroused.

"I'm sure I feel very flattered," he says awkwardly enough; but she does not even hear him.

"I'm thinking how I am to make it up to you, if you won't take money. Do you care for—for cakes of any kind?"

All he can do is to stare at her; and she goes on a little anxiously—

"Or—sweeties, for instance. I have some delicious American sweeties. Do you care for sweeties of any sort?"

"No," he says suddenly, as savage as a grizzly bear. "I care only for kisses."

She looks at him then, considerably taken aback.

"Do you really mean it?" she asks slowly after a sudden rush of color to her very temples has faded away and left her as cold and as white as a lump of ice.

"I mean this. I charge a very high price for my fruit and vegetables. I don't imagine for a moment that you will pay what I ask. You will therefore be supposed to owe me indefinitely for what——"

"No, I won't!" she exclaims. "I always say! Will four do—two on each cheek?"

It is his turn to be considerably taken aback.

"Of course," he says at length—"of course you know I don't want you to kiss me. It's nonsense!"

"Then you must take—five shillings."

He is almost rent in twain between a furious desire to box her ears and to snatch forty, not four, kisses.

"Do you consider four kisses—two on each cheek—an equivalent for your—your garden-stuff, or do you not?"

Garden stuff!

"I do!" he exclaims with fervor; and then, with an heroic effort, because of the utter gravity of her lovely dimpled face—"But, remember, I don't want to be paid at all!"

Her answer is to raise her face. He stoops to her and receives—two on each cheek—four of the sweetest, gentlest of kisses from a pair of the warmest, softest lips that ever existed!

The little episode leaves him as crimson as the strawberries and her as cool as the cucumbers that have just been settled for.

"I think," she says severely and deliberately, "that you wanted to make a complete fool of me. And you haven't, for I'm not so stupid and babyish as perhaps you think! I wanted to make you ashamed of yourself, and I'm sure I've done it. I'm sure that, whenever you look back to this day, shame is just what you will feel; whereas, when I look back to it, I shall say to myself, 'I'm very glad I paid that impudent man what he asked.'"

Before he has time to recover himself and think of a suitable remark, she has entered her donkey-carriage and driven off.

Then he draws a long breath and exclaims aloud—

"What a hateful little jelly-fish!"

Several pairs of eyes have however been witnesses of this little scene—those of Hodge at the door of a distant glass-house, into which he retreats giggling when there is no more to see; those of Stodge across the road on the top of a hay-rick, resting from his labors on a pitchfork and grinning from ear to ear; those of Roberts himself, from afar, designedly prying and naturally curious.

But these pairs of eyes have only seen, and their accompanying ears have not heard, consequently might not be so ready to vouch for the young lady's jelly-fishness as 'handsome Dick' himself.

There is yet another person who has viewed the little scene with the assistance of Mrs. Ffolliott's opera-glasses, hastily snatched from the drawing-room table. This is Miss Salome Champneys, the Rector's elder sister, an old friend of Mrs. Ffolliott's and of her mother before her. She is nearer seventy than sixty; she is small, thin, and delicate, but full of spirit.

She has no such intimate friends as the Ffolliotts, and they have not one so intimate a friend as herself. Mrs. Ffolliott calls her "Salome;" she calls Mrs. Ffolliott "my love." Sir Bryan calls her "Miss Champneys" or "Miss Salome," which she likes; Dick calls her "Miss Champneys," or "Miss Tyrant," or "Sal," which she delights to be called.

She calls them "boys," "young man," "my dear," or anything else she please. She has been a very devoted friend to them in many infantine trouble and illnesses and many boyish scrapes.

They are very much attached to her, and she is often a consummate bore to them; even Mrs. Ffolliott finds her very trying at times.

Presently Dick walks up the garden and through the French window into the drawing-room, and finds her there.

"Oh, are you there, Sally? Have you seen my mother?"

"No. I had only arrived when—— It's not for me to interfere, of course; but, my dear boy, who was that exceedingly forward young person in the donkey-carriage?"

"Why, where were you?" he asks.

"Where I had a nice view of her. Who is she?"

"That girl?" he asks innocently. "Oh, that girl—— Well, she's a Miss Harvest."

"Oh, the Californian!" exclaims Miss Champneys, in much the same tone in which she might have said, "Oh, the blue-nosed monkey!"

"Somebody said she was Australian," says Dick. "But what does it matter? Anyhow, she is not English—she cannot be."

Miss Champneys is intensely prejudiced.

"Of course you must be careful young man."

"Oh must I? Does she bite?"

"I know nothing at all about her, only that somebody told your mother that Mrs. De Burke says——"

"Oh, confound Mrs. De Burke!" interrupts Dick. "Mrs. De Burke doesn't mind what she says!"

"And neither do you, it would appear, Master Dicky," says Miss Champneys drily.

"Allow me to 'un-confound' Mrs. De Burke at once! A slip of the tongue, Miss Champneys! And what does Mrs. De Burke say?"

"She says that this girl's grandfather—she hadn't a father—— Oh, well, you know what I mean! The man died or disappeared; the grandfather left her a good deal of money. The thing is, how did the man get it?"

"What on earth does it matter?"

"Modern sentiments, those of yours, young sir! In our time it mattered everything. Besides, I am sure your mother would not like her."

"Don't alarm yourself, Tyrant. I am not going to bring her up here in my pocket—she wouldn't come. Besides, I don't want her. I didn't kiss her, you know; she kissed me." Miss Champneys's look of horror rouses him. "Oh, no—no, by George," he adds, laughing, "I don't mean that! The fact is—— Look here—I'd better tell you how it was."

"What an unnatural, calculating little wretch!" she cries, when the account is finished—and Dick has not spared himself. "I must say, my dear, that, if I were a matter of forty odd years younger than I am, I couldn't have done it. I think the girls nowadays are made of bread-and-butter. What—with your eyes staring at her and your smile!"

"Nonsense, Sally!" cries Dick, trying hard not to look too gratified. "Such a little refrigerator as that doesn't know whether one has a decent sort of appearance or not."

"Poor ignorant child—no! Well, you are going to this Rectory lawn-tennis affair, I suppose?"

"I don't know," says Dick.

"Laura Fielding will be there. Go and try a smile upon her."

Miss Fielding is a great catch, an heiress from the next county who at a recent ball flirted with Dick sufficiently to arouse a good deal of comment, and with whom Dick the susceptible was known—up to this morning—to be very much in love.

"Oh, will she?" he asks carelessly,

Miss Champneys has not time to look all the astonishment she feels when a bell rings very sharply and loudly from upstairs. They both look at each other, and cry "My mother!" "Your mother's bell!" simultaneously; and then they tear out of the room and up-stairs as quickly as they can, Dick with boisterous energy, three steps at a time, and Miss Champneys, quick and noiseless as a squirrel, close after him.

CHAPTER III.

At about the same time that Dick Ffolliott is being so agreeably paid for his fruit there is an arrival at the Westray station, where there are but two trains in the day, one up and one down.

There are a wooden platform and a wooden paling to separate it from the road; against these grow bright-hued hollyhocks and dahlias, amid which bees and wasps sail peacefully with pleasant hum.

There is a wooden shed, with a wooden bench around part of it, a fire-place with a remarkably dirty stove-ornament in it, the usual framed time-tables, texts, and advertisement-cards.

The other portion of the shed is, partitioned off, and forms an office, sacred to the authorities, with a small square window for the purpose of official inspection.

In this inner portion there is a murmur as of human occupation—in the outer there is not a sound; but a man is leaning against the palings sucking a straw, and waiting patiently for the event of the day—the arrival of the train from "Lunnon." It is due; there are signs of coming excitement and business: and in two minutes the London train thunders in.

Two passengers get out of a third-class compartment. One is a tall, rather loose-limbed man, middle-aged and plainly dressed, with a small valise in his hand; the other, whom he politely assists to alight, is a young girl of so remarkably charming a presence that her appearance is the signal for a succession of knowing winks between the porter and the man who is leaning against the palings sucking a straw.

Some luggage is taken out of the van—a large portmanteau and a carpet-bag, a modest black box, corded.

"Yours, sir? Is this all? Yours, miss?"

"Yes, thank you, that is all." "Right!"

Bang! The station-master holds out his arm—the train goes on. The event of the day is over!

"Well, now, look here," says the middle-aged gentleman, speaking with an exaggerated frown on his face and in a tone of voice which does not match it—"is this the kind of place you are? Isn't there such a thing as a carriage to meet us—me, I mean? Didn't every one, or any one, know I was coming? Isn't there a coach or a cart or a fly or a 'bus, or anything on wheels? Are we—am I, I mean—to stand here all day?"

The porter mumbles something.

"Where do I want to go? I want to go to Fladden Hall. My name is Barrable. I've taken—er—ah, well, yes—I've taken Fladden for a term of years!"

"Mr. Barrable, sir!" exclaims the porter, his eyes dilating with astonishment.

The man at the palings too suspends his straw-sucking in order to stare and listen, and a woman's head suddenly protrudes itself from the window of the sanctuary, and is as suddenly withdrawn.

"Well, why not send to the 'George'—or to the 'James' or the 'Thomas,' for that matter—and say I want a fly to go over to Fladden quickly?"

"He ain't one—not Jim ain't—to come out under a matter of five shillin'," remarks the porter, with a remnant of defiance.

At this the lovely grave-faced young lady, in her modest black alpaca gown and her tidy straw bonnet and little silk cape, laughs suddenly right out, and is so horrified with herself for doing it that her face turns crimson, and in her confusion she drops her bundle.

"Allow me!" exclaims the gentleman who had taken Fladden and has come down third class, darting forward to pick it up.

But something in the young girl's face warns him not to be too polite. He retreats confused; and the woman's head, that is once more protruding from the office window, is once more withdrawn.

The young girl speaks to the station-master.

"Walk? Yes, of course! A matter of two miles and a half, as straight as you can go, my dear, till you get to a pond; then you turn to the right till you come to the lower Fladden gates, then along some black wooden palings and a holly-hedge and a field with cows in it. If you go over the stile right across that field, and on by the kissing-gate, why, there you are in the grounds—only just you take a good look round, you know, when you come to that there identical gate, to see that there ain't no rubbishing young fellow anywheres near!"

"Cows!" repeats the young girl anxiously. "Are they fierce ones?"

"Fierce—them cows? They won't touch you, my dear, if you don't go irritatin' of 'em."

The young girl does not feel reassured. She is quite pink, and she glances involuntarily at the new owner of Fladden. 'Cows," she thinks to herself—"cows, with wild eyes and long horns!"

"Look here, little person," he says abruptly—"if you're afraid of cows, you had better let me give you a lift in the fly, when the thing comes. I feel for you because—er, er—I had a grandmother once who was very nervous about cows, and —er——"

The young girl however declines to offer respectfully but firmly. She makes an arrangement for her box to follow later on by the carrier's cart, and she proceeds deftly and decorously to pin up her skirt, as one who is not accustomed to bedraggle her garments in the dust.

And, while she is doing this, somebody comes behind her and says something.

"Sir?"

"I am saying," Mr. Barrable repeats, "that, if you are going to walk, my good girl, you had better start now; for, bless me, it's nearly five o'clock, and you've almost three miles to walk! And new maids don't generally arrive at their situations in the middle of the night."

"There, now," says the woman who has been watching them, going back to her family—"there's a 'oribie old meddler!"

"Thank you, tis," the young girl says quietly—"I am going now;" and she goes.

Mr. Barrable stands in the station doorway, and watches her until she has turned a bend in the road and is out of sight. Then he begins to fidget and to ask—

"When is that fly coming?"

And then, after a second or two, he says decidedly—

"I'll walk! Send up my things by the cart, if there is a real cart and it ever comes this way;" and he is off through the door.

Possibly he reflects that this is his first appearance at Westray in the character of the new owner of Fladden, and that, for the "big man" of the neighborhood, he has not been over-affable, for he comes back hurriedly and says to the assembled hues on the platform—

"Er, er—look here, now—Mrs.—er—— Ah, Evans then—Mrs. Evans! Allow me just a trifle for the children—frocks and buns—my first coming among you all—good friends, I hope—speech another day. No, no—no thanks—won't have 'em! Bother me! No, no—I mean—er—porter"—slipping five shillings into the man's hand—"look here—if that fly comes, don't send him on; tell him to send in his bill, and I'll pay it. And look here—tell him he'd better not take the horse out of the shafts, because I shall be wanting him some time next October, and he won't have time to take him out and put him in again—will he?" And, thus mingling his sarcasm and half-crowns, he departs once more.

When he has turned the bend in the road and is well out of sight, he stretches his awkward legs and runs.

It is not without some panting that he overtakes the young girl, and she is by no means repellent in manner when she perceives him; for, when, at the sound of hurriedly approaching footsteps, she turn to see who it may be, she does not even wait where she is until he comes up with her—she goes back a little way willingly to meet him, and eagerly signals to him to take his time.

"Dear—dear me!" she cries, when they are within speaking distance of each other. "Why did you, Mr. Barrable?"

"Why did I? One minute to get my breath! Why did I? Well, don't I know somewhere or other a girl who, if she meets a cow——"

"But she will have to meet them now—she must learn to meet them. Perhaps she nerved herself for the encounter with a strong drink out of a flask. Would you mind taxing this from me? I put it into my pocket not to hurt Hodgeman's feelings."

It is not a large flask, and it contains nothing stronger than sherry-and-water, and it is still full to the brim. Nevertheless he takes it from her and pops it into his pocket, with a full appreciation of the horrors of a possible discovery in hers; and they walk on.

"I hope we shall meet no one," the girl says presently.

"And if we do? I suppose two people may be walking by chance in the same direction—mayn't they? And, if they happen to be talking when some one draws nigh, all I shall have to do will be to says extra-loud, 'I'm a stranger about here myself, my good girl, and I don't know the way!' and all you will have to do will be to say, 'Thanky sir,' and ask the somebody if he can tell you the way to Sir Bryan Ffolliott's."

"You generally find a way out of my difficulties, do you not!" the young girl says gently: "I often wonder what makes you spoil me so Mr. Barrable!"

"Do you, my dear?"

"Yes, indeed. And how glad I was to see you coming just now! I'm afraid I'm like the London girl who said she really had no taste for black-berry-bushes, and highwaymen, and wasps'-nests, earwigs, lonely lanes, and other country pursuits!"

"Well, I shall be at Fladden, you know."

"How many times a day shall I tell myself that? But, if a wasp flies into the room, I can't run up to Fladden to fetch you to put it out again."

"But you can run and fetch Sir Bryan. Give him one of your wheedling little smiles, missie. Oh, my dear child, what a look! Forgive a poor old man who must have his harmless little joke!"

"But upon such a subject! Oh, if I thought that anybody would ever—could possibly think such a thing——"

"Why should they? If you have a wheedling smile, you have also a most freezing glance at your command. Besides, Sir Bryan is not the susceptible one, and you won't admire him. You'll be like the other idiots—you'll admire the brother. It is computed that for the last seven years he has broken hearts at the rate of one and three-quarters to every three days four hours and ten minutes."

But she does not smile; she walks on with a very troubled face, which brings many puckers into that of her companion. Nothing more is said until they reach the palings and see the stile farther on, and then he speaks.

"For the last time, dear missie, will you bear with me while I say something?"

"Bear with you, Mr. Barrable!" she echoes, with gentle emphasis on the "you," and a look that is softly tender.

Mr. Barrable only smiles back and says—

"Well, then, missie, look here. Is this wise? Will it do? Can your bear it?"

"My dear old friend, it is foolish! It may do—I will bear it."

"Moreover, your mind is made up?"

"Oh, as to that, it may have occured to you before now, Mr. Barrable, that I am self-willed!"

"It has not," he says. "You have a will but I never found you self-willed.'

"But in this case I have been self-willed; and I have a will—on, but such a will! I mean to reduce them to abject acquiescence in anything I choose to say. That is my plan; but how I am going to do it is another thing. I have only hazy designs. I want to make myself necessary. How does one make oneself necessary? The thing was to get here. I am here. Good! And I am going to make myself necessary."

"You want to make yourself necessary? Very well—love them. But you say you won't love them!"

"I think I shall, if they will let me.

"Richard Ffolliott will let you. But you don't mean that, so we won't argue it. What you can do is to show them your goodwill. I think that's about all."

"You would like, wouldn't you, Mr. Barrable, for me to turn round towards the station and go back to London?"

"I should. But you won't do it."

"I don't think you yet know that I must try this one chance, if my life is to be of any good to me," she says wistfully.

"It is not, dear girl, for the want of hearing you say so. And I wish you good luck—you know that."

"And really, do you know," she goes on, "I generally do get my own way. I'm a very determined person when I—— Oh, those fearful cows—such a lot! What's that one running for? Oh, Mr. Barrable, don't you think they look very fierce?"

"No, missie—not they! It's of no use to rend my poor heart in two by looking so pitifully at me. There's the Red House itself up yonder, and there's somebody in the field, so you won't be alone. I must go back, missie. When they come to know me, they would remember we were together and think it very strange. I mustn't go any farther, my dear."

"Oh, my goodness, such cows! And what's that man—a tramp? No; he looks nice, and he has a gun. He could shoot a cow for me if it came galloping up furiously at me."

"It's my belief it's Sir Bryan himself. You'll be all right. Good-bye for the present, dear child. Bless you—bless you!"

He wants her to smile; it is her old nurse who always says, "Bless you—bless you!" But she does not smile; she grips his hand tightly, and her color comes and goes, and her eyes fill with tears.

"You will be up at Fladden?"

"Of course I shall, and there, as here and everywhere, your humble slave, missie! You're not going among the heathen; and, remember, you can cry off at any time."

"I won't do that. I would say, 'Thank you, Mr. Barrable, for all your great kindness to me,' but I have no words to fit my thoughts of you."

"That's a great deal too pretty to say to an old boy like me. But come, come, my dear!"

She bids him good-bye, and goes her way across the field, and he goes back towards the Fladden gates.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

NERVOUS HEADACHES.—There are a good many kinds of headache. In these days the nervous headache, says a contemporary, is a very distinct variety. It is generally in the front of the head, across the forehead, over the eyes; but it may be in other parts—at the top of the head, at one or both sides, at the back, or all over. It is painful, depressing, disabling.

At the height of the paroxysm a man feels like a hunter who has galloped his legs clean off and who could not leap a three foot ditch to save his life. The spur is of no use, neither is the whip. The pain in the head is worse to bear than either, and the patient will rather endure both whip and spur than make any kind of effort which will make the head-pain worse. Physic by itself is of no use.

There is not a single drug known to medical science which will of itself at once permanently cure a nervous headache. On the other hand, drugs are not always needed.

A complete change of air and circumstances will usually take away the pain in ten or twelve hours. Perfect rest of a duration proportioned to the severity and long continuance of the symptoms will make the cure permanent.

There are of course methods of relieving or diminishing the pain until such time as it may be possible to obtain the complete rest. But the rest is the thing to be obtained at all costs.

If not, the pain goes from bad to worse, and the risk from less to greater.

The finial consequence it is impossible to predict, except that a break-down is sooner or later inevitable, and the break-down may be for a year or for a lifetime. A nervous headache is a danger signal; if it be frequent, the danger is increased—if it be continuous, a catastrophe is imminent.

"MOTHER."—More and more as we grow we appreciate the finer traits that are in human nature. Men going out into life never forget the mother who stays at home, and who has presented to them a nature with reason dominant, with a high moral sense, with refined and sweet affections, with taste, with patience, with gentleness, with self-sacrifice, and with disinterestedness. A man may go through all the world, he may run through every stage of belief and unbelief, he may destroy his fineness in every respect, but there will be one picture he cannot efface. Living or dying, there will rise before him, like a morning star, the beauty of that remembered goodness which he called "mother."

"WHAT is the difference between ice and water?" "Ice is frozen water; that is all. "There is a greater difference than that." "What is it?" "Water always finds its evel, but ice is constantly going up."

Bric-a-Brac.

WHY THE "NUTCRACKERS" ARE SO CALLED.—The famous English regiment of Buffs, which used also to be known as the 31 Foot, once rejoiced for a while in the nickname of the "Nutcrackers." This was after the battle of Albuera, which was fought on the 16th of May, 1811. In this terribly fierce conflict they attacked the Polish Lancers, whose heads they cracked. Then, after the fashion of the nut cracking tool, they opened to avoid the charge of the Polish horse, and retreated.

A LEAF CRADLE.—Leaves of the Brazilian water-lily known as the *Victoria regia* are fully three feet in diameter, and are like round green tea-trays with a border one inch high. Though they rest lightly on the surface of the water, they are so strong that a baby could stand upon one without sinking. Such a use, indeed, is made of them by South American mothers, who often place their bairns in them when they need a rest. Thus the leaf becomes a sort of cradle, or even a boat. The flower is a large pure white lily of great delicacy.

HANDWRITING.—About 450 B. C. the Ionians first introduced the present system of writing from left to right. Previous to the above date from right to left prevailed, although the method called boustrophed (that is, alternately from right to left and from left to right) was somewhat extensively practiced. The ancient Hebrew and Greek languages were written from right to left until about 450 B. C., when the form of the Greek letters was changed from the unical to the cursive, and the manner of writing changed from right to left to left to right.

HYPNOTISM.—It is not a difficult thing for some people to hypnotize themselves; that is, to a certain degree. They assume an easy position, sitting up or half reclining, and breathe deeply and evenly, and at the same time rapidly. Very soon sleep ensues. And after retiring, if troubled with wakefulness, it can generally be quickly overcome by this simple procedure. Another way is to take an easy position and steadfastly gaze at a small, shining object placed about two feet from the eyes and a little above their level. Sleep will often ensue within five minutes.

PUSSY'S VALUE.—Whatever may be the case nowadays, there was a time when the cat was held in considerable honor in Wales. King Howel Dda, "the Good," who died in 748, ordered that the price of a kitten before it could see was to be one penny. When it caught its first mouse its value became twopence, and the price was afterwards raised to fourpence. The prince's granary was guarded by cats, and if anyone slew or stole one of these watch-cats he was severely punished. He had either to forfeit a ewe, or to give up as much corn as would cover the cat when it was hung up by its tail.

FRIDAY.—Lee surrendered on Friday. Moscow was burned on Friday. Washington was born on Friday. Shakespeare was born on Friday. America was discovered on Friday. Richmond was evacuated on Friday. The Bastile was destroyed on Friday. The Mayflower was landed on Friday. Queen Victoria was married on Friday. Fort Sumpter was bombarded on Friday. King Charles I. was beheaded on Friday. Julius Cæsar was assassinated on Friday. Napoleon Bonaparte was born on Friday. The battle of Marengo was fought on Friday. The battle of Waterloo was fought on Friday. Joan of Arc was burned at the stake on Friday. The battle of Bunker Hill was fought on Friday. The battle of New Orleans was fought on Friday. The Declaration of Independence was signed on Friday.

MEMORY IN THE DOG.—Everyone knows that the dog has a good memory, but it would be hard to tell how far back its recollection of persons and things can go. Here is a touching story that throws some light on this point. A gentleman being unable to keep his dog in his house, gave it away when it was a twelvemonth old. Eight years afterwards it was restored to its original master. At first it looked upon him simply as a stranger, and then it began to walk round and round him, sniffing at him in a curious way, as much as to say, "There's something about you that is not perfectly strange to me." The creature grew more and more excited, but when he stooped and patted it, and called it by its name, it gave what he described as a "scream of rapture," and jumped into his arms. From that moment it never left him. This is an instance of a dog nine years old remembering a person whom it had not seen for eight years.

AUTUMN.

BY S. W.

Dews falls from Autumn's drooping head
His crown of ruddy gold;
Through the still air the leaves drop dead,
And lie upon the mould.

Wild voices haunt the windy night,
Wild meteors fire the skies
And leave them darker, like the light
In fever-burning eyes.

Sad Autumn, lay these down and sleep—
Accept the law of doom!
One scentless flow'r—the last I keep
To place upon thy tomb!

A Slandered Memory

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BAILIFF'S DAUGHTER," "IN SEARCH OF HIM," "WHICH WAS HER DEAREST," ETC.

CHAPTER XV.

HOW fine, how stately, the great dining room of Carolside looked that winter morning, with the great logs blazing on the hearth, the sleepy dogs stretched out upon the rug, the tempting paraphernalia of breakfast displayed on the table!

Cuthbert's first impression of Ivy was that she did not look so pretty in her modern tailor-made morning-dress as in the peculiar costume she had the night before.

She was in gray this morning—a warm gray cloth fitting closely to her slender figure, relieved at throat and wists by a touch of deep blue velvet.

Her only ornament was a small gold horse-shoe brooch which fastened her collar. With a bright smile she looked up from her brass urn as the tutor entered.

"I hope you slept well?" she said.

Her voice was one of her charms—it was so perfectly refined and clear. Somehow it only prejudiced Cuthbert the more against her.

He had taken a violent dislike to the "little red-haired Miss Cumnor," as he had described her in his letter to Olive begun on the previous night.

She went on apologetically, laying her hand caressingly on Roy's dark curls—

"I am afraid this pickle of mine disturbed you this morning?"

"Not at all, thank you."

Cuthbert felt that his answer was stiff, his tone cold; but he could not shake off the aversion he felt for this girl. The unwilling admiration he had been obliged to accord to her on the preceding night only deepened this feeling.

To see her hold up her head and speak of the ancestral traditions of her family almost maddened him. What would become of that dainty pride if she knew what her father was?

Cuthbert Iredell had never before thoroughly disliked a woman: now the thought of the humiliation of Ivy Cumnor added a fresh zest to his thirst for revenge.

It was wrong, vindictive, unworthy; but he was very far from perfect.

Her refinement of manner, the taste and sumptuous luxury of the furniture in her boudoir—each was a fresh affront—for he knew that the boudoir and the house and everything it contained were his, not hers—the very clothes she wore belonged to him; and her lady-like courtesy seemed far more exasperating than would a vulgar patronising manner.

He had been quiet and reserved at dinner the night before; he was still more reserved this morning—in fact, he scarcely spoke at all except to Roy and Grantley.

The child had evidently fixed his affections on his new tutor. He insisted on his place being laid next to him at table, and scrambled up to his chair with such delight.

"I always sat next Ivy till you came," he announced, "but now I'd much rather sit next you;" and Cuthbert rejoiced to see the wave of color that suffused Ivy's pale cheeks and the expression of pain about her pretty lips.

"Now come and see our schoolroom," said the eager child, as soon as the meal was over; and, as if in a dream, Cuthbert found himself walking into what had once been his own nursery.

He could not speak for a minute; he walked forward, and stood staring out of the well-remembered diamond-paned window across the beautiful valley, now bare and leafless.

There was the little red-roofed church with its square tower, and there, close under the window, the bowling green round which he had trotted, driving that ever-willing horse, his father, with scarlet woolen reins.

For the second time a strong flood of memory almost unmanned him. Roy, who had climbed on to the window-seat, gazed up at him with wondering eyes.

"Are you crying, Mr. Walrond?" he asked.

Cuthbert never equivocated to a child.

"Very near it, little man," he answered.

"What are you crying for?" pursued Roy sympathetically.

"I am thinking of the time when I was a little chap like you—a long time ago now."

The child raised himself to a standing position and put both arms round his tutor's neck, hiding his face against the young man's shoulder.

"I love you!" he said simply. "Cheer up—do!"

It was the most consoling thing he could have said. Iredell laughed, and brushed away the momentary signs of weakness.

"Come," he said—"we must set to work with a will if we want to go out before luncheon time."

* * * * * *

"Well, Ivy," said Agnes Cumnor, bringing her work into her young cousin's sanctum, where the two usually passed a couple of hours after breakfast, what do you think of Mr. Walrond?"

Ivy was on her knees, busy over a lonely case of ferns from which she was removing the dead fronds; so Agnes did not see the sudden flush of color which tinted the pale cheeks.

"He is very handsome," she answered.

"Handsome! Do you really think so?"

"Certainly. He has very fine eyes. Do you know—you will laugh at me, Agnes, but I do believe he is like our family; he reminds me of two or three of the portraits in the gallery."

"I know what you mean; it is the shape of his head, his height and slenderness, and the dark eyes with a trace of melancholy in them."

"His complexion too," said Ivy. "As Roy put his cheek against Mr. Walrond's, you might have taken them to be father and son."

"Dear me! I could not go so far as that," demurred Mrs. Cumnor, laughing.

Ivy did not reply; she went on clipping her ferns with dexterous fingers, and refreshing them from a small water-can.

"I cannot say that I like his manners," continued Agnes, after a pause. "He is more than quiet—he is morose. It struck me that he was not used to the society of ladies; but Grantley says he is quite a gentleman."

"It struck me that he did not like us," said Ivy quietly.

"Not like us, Ivy?"

"No. I could not help thinking that he had a sort of contempt for us. I wonder," she continued thoughtfully, "what I should think of myself if I met myself for the first time?"

Agnes laughed, and then observed—

"I think, at all events, we are sufficiently average persons to be out of reach of Mr. Walrond's contempt."

"I don't like any one to dislike me," said Ivy.

"My dear child, I should not trouble my head about my brother's tutor!" remarked Agnes, almost reprovingly.

"I want to be kind to him—I think he looks unhappy," persisted Ivy.

"If he is unhappy at Carolside, he must be a discontented young man," returned Agnes. "He would not find himself treated with so much consideration in many places."

"I wonder if my papa and he will get on?" said Ivy, with a smile.

"I fancy Grantley has cautioned him against losing his temper; but even a saint would be in danger of provoking Gervase."

"And yet dear papa does not mean it; he would never do an unkind thing wittingly!" exclaimed Ivy warmly.

Agnes did not answer; she only looked gravely at her work.

"Ah, I know you are thinking of Roy's poor little mamma and her sad death!" said Ivy. "But you know, Agnes, I always differ from you there."

"My dear child, I don't think you know anything about it!"

"I know that Roy's mother loved papa! And just think how sad it must be for a man to find out that his wife never loved him! I don't say papa was right, but I am very sorry for him."

Agnes did not reply, and there was an interval of silence.

"I hear a horse's hoofs," said Mrs. Cumnor presently. "Who can the visitor be so early in the morning?"

"Oh, nobody!" rejoined Ivy. "One of the grooms exercising the horses, most likely. Are you going to drive this afternoon, Agnes? I want to call on Lady Carstairs."

"A good idea; you had better ring the bell and order the horses. We must start early to get to Levinwater and back before dusk."

The scarlet curtain swayed, and a footman's head appeared in the doorway.

"Lord Raunsleigh!"

The young peer had entered before Ivy had time to spring up from her kneeling position.

"O, I do hope you will forgive this unwarrantable intrusion!" he began. "I must apologize for disturbing you! Miss Cumnor, please don't rise; I shall not stay a moment. I only just looked in to ask what news you have from Mr. Cumnor, and to bring a few Neapolitan violets. Miss Cumnor, I heard you say that the gardener had spoilt your crop, and I think you said you were fond of them." He produced a little basket of lovely pale purple blossoms embedded in maidenhair.

"Oh, how very kind of you!" said the girl, gracious and self-possessed, as she rose to take the pretty gift from his hands. "Agnes and I both love to have our rooms scented with violets. Do sit down; I will put them into water now at once. I must apologize for the disorder of the room; Drew should have shown you into a tidier apartment."

"It was awfully good of him to show me in here," returned Lord Raunsleigh, sitting down blissfully in a most luxurious armchair and watching with interest as Ivy reached down from above the mantelpiece a milky Venetian glass, set it upon a tiny table, filled it with water, and then, seating herself, began to arrange her flowers.

It seemed to him hardly possible that three weeks before he had never seen Ivy Cumnor; he wondered how life had passed in the weary years that were gone. There was no future for him now apart from her. To be able to call her his wife was all he felt any desire to live for.

There were a good many chapters in his past which would not bear looking at too closely, but that did not trouble him very much.

He meant to be very good now that he was rich—he meant his future to belong to Ivy. There was only one person who could witness against him—only one who knew any particulars of that past which he guarded so carefully.

It was more than unlikely that this one person would ever come near such a small obscure district as Lavemead. In fact, Lord Raunsleigh never troubled his head about such a contingency. This morning he was singularly buoyant and unruffled. He was in the presence of the girl he loved so passionately, and she was smiling graciously upon him.

To a man more versed in the ways of girls like Ivy, this easy cordiality might not have seemed a good sign; but the women whom Lord Raunsleigh had been accustomed to were of a different class, among which, if a girl was "sweet upon" a man, she usually showed it.

So he talked on easy and pleasantly, and presently unfolded a scheme upon which he had set his heart.

"The fact is, I want to give a housewarming," he said; "and of course, you see, I am not *au fait* at such things; and I thought perhaps I might venture to come and ask for a few hints."

Ivy manifested great interest. She was fond of society, and entertainments on a large scale were rather the exception than the rule in the district round Lavemead.

"I am puzzled to know what to do," he continued. "A ball seems such a hackneyed sort of entertainment unless one has a large house-party, and I hardly know people intimately enough to make one a success. I should have to ask my fiftieth cousin, the Duchess of Crewkerne, to be chaperon, and, as she and I mutually dislike each other, I'm afraid the idea would not work well. What do you think, Mrs. Cumnor?"

"I hardly know what to say. It is difficult to know what other sort of entertainment to suggest," replied Agnes thoughtfully. "If it were summer, you could entertain the whole country in your grounds; but, as it is winter, that is impossible. A reception is always a dreary thing; you could not invite one-tenth of your friends if you gave a dinner party; and private theatricals are open to the same objection as the dance—to make them successful, you must have a house party."

"Theatricals sound nice, though," said Lord Raunsleigh eagerly. "I heard of tableaux vivants that the De Veres had a short time ago over at the other side of the county which were a tremendous success. I wonder if such a thing would be practicable?"

"It would be very amusing," remarked Ivy, with some "empressement."

"Would you like it?" he asked eagerly. "I tell you what—I have an idea! Seton Lovell, the Royal Academician, is a sort of connection of mine. If I had him down to arrange the tableaux, his wife could chaperon for me, and then we could do without the Duchess."

"What a splendid idea! An R. A. to pose us!" cried Ivy. "That is"—blushing—"if I am invited to take part."

"Invited to take part! You will be the centre of everything!" cried the young man, with enthusiasm; then, checking himself in some confusion—"That is, I wanted to say—to ask you, Mrs. Cumnor—do you think that Mr. Cumnor would consider it absurd for you all to come and stay with me? Will he think that Dallithwayte and Carolside are too near? I do so want to have you on the spot, because you are the only people that I feel I really know. If you were there, I could fearlessly ask others of whom I know less; you would set the whole thing going."

"I am sure Gervase will have no objection to our coming," returned Agnes. "That he himself will come I cannot promise you; but I know that my husband will. There is nothing he enjoys so much as a house party."

"Splendid! That is just what I want! Mr. Cumnor may be let off if I may count upon Miss Cumnor, yourself, and the Major. Now will you add to all your kindnesses by setting the date, for that is the chief thing?"

Nothing loath, Ivy produced the book of engagements, which was not very full, and the date was settled for a day about five weeks distant.

"But you can give Mr. Seton Lovell his choice of that week or the week before," said Agnes. "Either will suit us; and I know how busy artists always are. You must secure him, whatever happens."

"You are really too good!" exclaimed the young man. "I don't know how to thank you enough, both of you. We will spare no expense or trouble to make my house warming the talk of the country-side."

He rose to make his adieux, having no longer the shadow of an excuse to linger.

"How is my friend Roy? How is it I have not seen him?" he asked.

"Oh, have you not heard? Papa has engaged a tutor for poor Roy," said Ivy. "He said I was spoiling him so dreadfully! The tutor arrived last night, and so far Roy is delighted with him.

"'New brooms sweep clean,' remarked Lord Raunsleigh.

"Yes," said Agnes, in a comforting tone; "so I tell Ivy, who was almost inclined to make herself unhappy at the entire transfer of Roy's allegiance."

"I do miss him so!" said Ivy. "He was always with me all the morning."

"They say few people are sensible enough of the blessing they have," rejoined Lord Raunsleigh, conscious of a sympathetic lump in his throat.

"Won't you stay to luncheon and give us your opinion of Roy's tutor?" asked Agnes.

"I only wish I could, Mrs. Cumnor; but I am due to luncheon at the Vicarage."

CHAPTER XVI.

"MR. WALROND, can I go to tea with nurse's aunt Salome?"

Roy pushed open the schoolroom door and ran in, shuting his request at the top of his voice.

"What's that you say, old man? Shut the door—there's a draught," said his tutor, looking up from the letter which he was writing, and removing his pipe from his mouth.

It was after luncheon, a time when master and pupil generally took their walks abroad; but on this day there had been a sharp shower, and Cuthbert had taken advantage of it to begin a long letter to Miss Pierrepoint, having given Roy permission to go and spend an hour with nurse, who was rather broken hearted at seeing so little of her boy nowadays.

Ten days had slipped away swiftly, much to Iredell's surprise. He found that he did not dislike the work to which he had applied himself.

Roy was outrageously naughty—willful enough to keep the patience and ingenuity of his instructor constantly exercised; and, as Cuthbert always came off victorious in the end, by dint of an evenness of temper which nothing could ruffle, he found the process of teaching the young idea how to shoot an amusing as well as a lively one. The child repaid his training by an affection for him as deep as it was ardent.

Having once found that it was as impossible to make Mr. Walrond angry as it was to shake his determination, and that he

never threatened punishment or promised reward without keeping his word, Roy became his tutor's, body and mind, and by his open nature and great originality, speedily endeared himself to the tall quiet young man, who inherited a great love of children from his father.

Whatever Cuthbert Iredell may have been, Mr. Walrond was the most taciturn of men.

He spoke to the ladies only just as much as civility required, and the wish to be kind to him which Ivy had expressed was never fulfilled, for lack of opportunity.

Evidently he did not wish any one to be kind to him. After Roy had retired to bed, he would appear in the coudoir for a few moments before dinner, in irreproachable evening dress, but apparently without a word to say.

After dinner he would smoke a cigar with the Major, and excuse himself from rejoining the ladies on the plea that the evening was the only time he had for reading, after which he retired to the schoolroom and was seen no more.

On the first night when Grantley walked in and made this announcement Ivy accidently kicked down all the tiny brass fire-irons, causing the startled Major to interject a hasty word.

Then Ivy discovered that she could not sing—her voice was out of order, she was as husky as a crow, and really thought she would go and get nurse to make her a treacle-posset.

So she withdrew at half-past nine, and walked away along the great hall and up the black shallow oak stairs, trailing her white gown and with a little wrinkle of annoyance on her forehead.

Ivy Cumnor was very romantic. Her two London seasons had not cured her of this failing; she still preferred the dreamy, the picturesque, the ideal, to the advantageous, the worldly, and the real. It seemed to her as if Cuthbert Walrond was the embodiment of romance.

She had seen at once that he was a gentleman; the expression of his face led her to believe that he was unhappy. She was sure that his position could not be congenial, and she was struck by his resemblance to the portraits of her ancestors. In these circumstances she wanted to befriend him—wanted him to feel that the recognised his equality with herself, to prove herself anything but the conventional rich man's daughter who spurned the tutor as a humble dependant.

It was rather hard to have all her kind intentions met by absolute impenetrability; and in the solitude of her own apartment Ivy decided that the tutor was rude and that she would take no further notice of him. It was hard though to hear, in passing, the fun which evidently went on in the schoolroom; and sometimes Miss Cumnor, who was vivacious and high-spirited, would linger and listen enviously to the laughter and talking inside.

"If he can laugh and talk so to Roy, there must be some reason why he is so silent and stately with us," she reflected. "I believe that what I said to Agnes was true—he doesn't like us."

On this particular day she had been in the nursery with Roy, and was just outside the schoolroom door, close enough to see the genial smile with which Iredell turned from his writing, to hear his request that the door should be shut, to wonder at her little brother's unhesitating obedience to that order. She moved away with a feeling of sadness and jealousy at her heart. Meanwhile Cuthbert half turned from the table at which he sat, imprisoned Roy's lithe body with one arm, and with the other hand pushed back the masses of dark curls from the child's forehead.

"How hot you have made yourself, child!" he said.

"Yes, I dare say; Sis has been playing at ogres with me. Can I go to tea with nurse's aunt Salome?"

"Who is nurse's aunt Salome? Are you ever allowed to go to tea with her?"

"Yes, I often go; but nurse can't take me this afternoon, 'cause she's busy getting up lace for Sis; and Salome Thurkill has sent her little grandson to invite me, and I do so want to go."

"Does Miss Cumnor approve of your going?"

"I'll just call her, and you can ask her;" and without pausing a moment, the child ran out of the room, returning in a few minutes with Ivy captive in his train.

Iredell rose instinctively as the young girl entered, and placed a chair for her, closing his blotter at the same time and pushing it away.

"I'm very sorry to trouble you," he said—"I assure you it is not by my order that you are peremptorily summoned before me; but I was anxious to find out whether it is an authorized delight for Roy to take tea with Mrs. Salome Thurkill?"

Ivy went up to the fire and held her hands to the blaze.

"Oh, yes," she replied; "he often goes! She is nurse's aunt, and very respectable."

"I must apologize for the smell of tobacco; it has only just occurred to me that I've been smoking!" cried Iredell suddenly.

"I don't mind the smell, thanks! Roy may go or not, just as you think proper."

"Put on your things, old man; I'll take you," said Cuthbert; and Roy disappeared, shouting gleefully.

"There is no need for you to take him, Mr. Walrond," said Ivy gently, there are plenty of servants.

"Thanks; I shall be glad of the walk. Is it far?"

"Oh, no, not far! If you go, I advise you to go in and see Salome; she is quite a character. She was in service here once."

"Indeed! With your father?" asked Cuthbert, with sudden interest.

"No—before papa came here. There was dreadful trouble, I believe, about a forged will. Papa never will tell me about it; but a Colonel Iredell, to whom the property did not really belong, had the place for a time, and Salome was nurse to his little son."

"Really?" said Cuthbert, scarcely knowing what remark to make.

"I don't know if I have the story right. Salome is not allowed to talk to us about it," went on the unconscious girl; "but the other day, when I was there with Roy, she told me his face 'minded' her wonderfully of what her baby was. That meant Colonel Iredell's little boy."

There was a moment's silence; then Cuthbert inquired indifferently—

"What became of Colonel Iredell and his little boy?"

"They are both dead," she answered sadly.

The tutor fixed his eyes upon the fire, leaning his elbow on the mantelpiece, and remained silent for some moments.

"Do you know how or where they died?" he asked presently.

"I know nothing of the little boy; the Colonel lies buried in the churchyard here."

The long silence which followed was broken by Roy running in equipped for his walk.

"Come along," he cried—"I'm quite ready; and, if you like, I'll take you in and induce you to Salome!"

"'Introduce,' I suppose you mean," said Ivy, laughing, as teacher and pupil left the room together.

Salome Thurkill lived in a very pretty cottage which in summer was covered with creepers; but Cuthbert was not able to gather a very fair idea of it in the bare March bleakness.

There was a piercing breeze laden with ozone from the neighboring ocean; the passing shower had left they sky a vivid blue; the sunlight was causing the raindrops to sparkle on the bare boughs, and the grass was of such an intense green as to remind one that the season had turned and that the throbbing life of old earth would soon burst forth in the beauty of a new spring.

Salome's parlor was trim and neat as the young man and the child entered it. By the fire sat a woman who might have been 65 years old or even more.

Her cheeks were hale and fresh; her small dark eyes were bright as she looked inquiringly over the rims of her tortoise-shell spectacles.

Her back was bent, but she was not infirm—indeed there was a very vigorous look about her.

"How do you do, Salome? Mrs. Morse has sent you some butter and some tea, and a chicken," announced Roy, marching in. "And I hope you're very well: and I've got a tutor, and I've brought him to see you; and this is him!"

At this ungrammatical climax the old woman raised her eyes to Cuthbert's face, and held up her hands. For a moment she remained quite immovable, her lips parted; then she said, in a strange faltering whisper—

"Goodness ha' mercy on us! Who is it? I don't understand."

"It's my tutor, Salome! Didn't you hear what I said?" cried Roy.

"It's Colonel Iredell, as I hope to draw breath!" gasped the woman in terror. "Eh, dear, I never thought the dead could rise to reproach me!" She rose from her chair and glared at Cuthbert. "What do you come to me for? I ain't done nothing!" she gasped. "Go to him up to Caroloide—to Master Cumnor—'twas him for you to settle with. I tell you I ain't done nothing, nor 'twas no concern o' mine!"

"I am afraid I alarm you," said Iredell courteously. "For whom do you take me? My name is 'Walrond.' Are you thinking of days long gone by?"

"Yes, that's it!" she stammered, sinking slowly into her seat and cowering, as if she disliked his gaze. "It's days long ago I'm thinking of—days when I was housekeeper up at the Hall yonder. 'Walrond's' the name; what a poor memory I've got!"

She wiped her eyes with a shaking hand.

"Why, Salome," said Roy, in his high-pitched tones, "you're all of a tremble!"

Cuthbert, whose own heart was beating uncomfortably fast, sat down upon a chair and drew the boy towards him.

"We broke into suddenly on Mrs. Thurkill," he observed, in his pleasant way. "I am afraid I have startled her."

"Don't you name it, sir; it's me to ask pardon!" said Salome, rallying. "An old woman's memory is treacherous, and I 'ad been sitting here a-thinking of old times till I fairly didn't know where I was nor who I was talking to. Come and kiss me, my bonny boy!"—and she held out a hand to the child, with a furtive glance at the tutor which did not escape his notice.

"I quite understand, Mrs. Thurkill," said Cuthbert, as unconcernedly as he could. "Your knowledge of the Cumnor family extends back a good many years, I'll be bound."

"It's fifty-five years ago last March as I went to be kitchen-maid up at the Hall," she replied; "and it's a long way to take your memory back is five and fifty years, sir. The Hall has seen two other masters since then; but I was never in service to Mr. Cumnor that is now. My niece, she took the place—I was getting old."

Cuthbert could not help reflecting that at the time of Gervase Cumnor's entering into possession, five-and-twenty years before Mrs. Thurkill could not have been stricken in years—in fact, she still looked remarkably ablebodied.

He sat gazing at her like one in a dream, hearing again the voice familiar to him in his infancy, seeing again the pink ribbons with which his nurse used to adorn her cap.

Strange that he should be sitting there, dishonored and dispossessed, this little eager-eyed boy against his knee heir to all that should have been his by right!

The discovery of Salome's existence was a ray of hope to him. By the woman's incoherent words, still more by her furtive looks and uneasy manner, he gathered that she knew a great deal.

Of course now was not the time to elicit what she knew—he must wait—and he stood up and bade her good day, and left Roy in her charge with a strict injunction to be good and not eat too much.

But, as he turned homewards, he thought with a pleasurable sensation that there was good news to recount to Olive.

* * * * * *

It was a lovely afternoon as Cuthbert left Salome's cottage; the sun was just beginning to set. From his position at the top of the village street he could see the path of glory on the wavelets of the murmuring sea below.

A thought came to him as he stood there. His time was his own; nobody would require his presence at Caroloide for hours to come. He would go and see his father's grave.

Down the precipitous street he walked, and then along a narrow lane cut like a terrace on the side of the cliff, on beyond the village to where a winding pathway led to the small gray church and the colony of peaceful dead sleeping in its shadow.

There were many graves in Caroloide churchyard. The dead of that quiet district for generations back lay there; on every side the quaint old headstones,

"With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implored the passing tribute of a sigh."

The young man waded patiently among rank grass for a long time unsuccessfully, and was just beginning to fear that there must be a family vault inside the church, when he suddenly caught sight of his own name carved on a very plain but massive marble headstone—

"MARY IREDELL."

That was all that appeared on the stone, with the exception of two dates which showed that Mary Iredell died at the age of twenty-eight years. To the right of this grave was another, equally plain and not so costly. On a square stone slab was the following inscription—

"Under this stone are the mortal remains of CUTHBERT IREDELL, "Colonel —th Regiment, who was buried on the third day of October, 18—, Aged 42."

Who was Mary Iredell? Cuthbert wondered; and then, studying the date of her death, which was more than thirty years earlier than that of his father, he came to the conclusion that she must have been the Colonel's mother.

But why was there no word of love or regret on her tombstone? Why was she buried with merely her name inscribed in so perfunctory a manner? Cuthbert took out the black pocket-book with brass clasps and began to calculate dates with great exactitude.

He, Cuthbert, was twenty-eight years old. His father had been dead twenty-four years; add these twenty-four years to the thirty which he had elapsed since Mary Iredell was laid to rest, and it gave the fifty-five years during which Salome Thurkill had been connected with the Cumnor family.

She could doubtless tell him all about this unknown grandmother of his—her life, the manner of her death, everything he wanted to know.

"Mary Iredell." There was something very pathetic in the blank unsatisfying nature of the record. He found himself beginning to speculate as to who his own grandfather had been.

Cuthbert Iredell the elder had been old Mr. Cumnor's nephew; Mary Iredell's maiden name was Cumnor then, of course.

Whom had she married? What became of her husband? Why had she been laid to rest with no word of sorrow, no mention of husband or brother or son; and why out here in the desolate rank grass of the churchyard, instead of within, in the family vault of the Cumnors, among her own kith and kin? Was there any mystery connected with his father's birth and parentage? Perhaps his mother might be able to help him here, or, most likely of all, Salome Thurkill.

He felt as if his guiding star had led him that afternoon to call in at the little cottage at the head of the village street. He began to think that the mystery he had undertaken to unravel was even more intricate than he had at first believed.

He slowly left the place and began to ascend a small footpath which led into a plantation of larches.

This plantation was the property of Lord Raunsleigh, but there was a right of way through it, and small as was Cuthbert's knowledge of the geography of the place, he divined that this was his most direct road to Caroloide.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

SAVED BY A BULLFROG.—There are at least four newspaper reporters in New York who are staunch friends of the bullfrog family. They are engaged on morning papers, and several evenings ago they were plowing their way at a tremendous pace through the sand and wire grass of the meadows skirting Newark Bay back of Greenville, N. J., to investigate a story of a yacht that had been missing, with eleven men on board, for several days.

The hour was late, the story promised to be a long one, and much valuable time had been wasted in discovering the name of the place from which the boat had sailed, so the young men were pushing on in the dark toward the shore without stopping to search for footpaths.

All at once, from just beneath their feet, a voice, that was almost human, croaked "B'loukkout," and, as the travelers stopped short to take advice, a big frog jumped with a plunk into the canal.

One more step would have taken the young men into its muddy depths, where they would have certainly received a most unpleasant ducking and possibly have lost their lives, as it would of been no easy matter to have climbed up the yielding clay walls of the waterway.

HIS FIRST.—A railroad engineer in Maine saw a man on the track waving at him a few days ago, and his mind filled with the possibility of impending danger, stopped the train. Every one was in a high state of excitement, but the man coolly boarded the smoking car without uttering a word. He looked as if he had not traveled far from his native heath, and, on being questioned, said: "Wal, I just waved my hand 'cos I wanted to get on the keers. I'm going to Wells, and I never been on the keers before." He spoke, it is said, with an unmistakable air of innocence, and raised such a flood of good nature that the conductor silently took his fare, and when he landed at Wells he was loudly cheered in honor of his first ride.

Cato, being scurrilously treated by a low and vicious fellow, quietly said to him: "A contest between us is very unequal, for thou canst bear ill language with ease and return it with pleasure; but to me it is unusual to hear and disagreeable to speak it."

MEMORIES.

BY MAUD E. SARGENT.

A glad bright smile; a golden curly head;
Soft eyes like violets blue; two lips so red;
I wonder, as the years have onward sped,
What they have brought to thee?

Old memories that hover through my brain,
Old dreams of joy and sorrow, love and pain,
Of happy days that ne'er can come again,
The years have brought to me.

A few brief words, a few short sunny hours,
A Summer passed among the leafy bow'rs,
A withered bunch of once fair blooming flow'rs,
And then—no more, no more!

A wintry night, with clouds of driving snow—
Gone are the flow'rs and joys I used to know;
The firelight only sheds a feeble glow,
My memories are o'er!

Poor Aunt Deb!

BY JANE MASON.

POOR AUNT DEB! Yes, that was just what I thought as I read the superscription on the small bundle of papers I found in the cabinet in her room. "A page in a life's history—to be destroyed at my death."

Fancy Aunt Deb with a secret o' anyone's to keep. I always thought of her as leading a comfortable, placid existence, without even a knowledge of any tragedy or soul's trouble of any sort.

But, however, here's something evidently out of the common—and as she left all her possessions to "My dear niece, Jane," I don't see why I should not share the secret, and see whether she really ever had an adventure, or what this precious bundle contains.

* * * * * * *

Fifteen years ago I was sitting at my breakfast table waiting for old Robin to bring me my letters, and any scrap of news he might have picked up from our rural postman; congratulating myself meanwhile on the comfort and cosiness of my "sin ingle neuk" in this dreary November weather.

When the letters came, however, my self gratulations came to an abrupt end. On the top of the small heap was one from my brother in Lincolnshire.

"Nov. 10th, 184 –.

"DEAR DEB:—Would it be too cruel to ask you to come and stay a week with me? Mrs. Kenworthy is bound to go to the help of her sick daughter, and I have no fancy for being left to the tender mercies of two giggling girls. I must also be away one night, as I am pledged to preach at A——, and cannot get home again till early the following morning.

"Your disconsolate brother,
"WILLIAM GRAND."

What could I say? I should prefer not to go, decidedly. But when I remembered his constant work in that lone, dreary parish, and how completely he depended on his old housekeeper for the few comforts he enjoyed, I could do nothing else but write and say I would be with him the next day.

Accordingly in the early morning we started off, my maid, Marie, and I, by a train which landed us at the nearest station to Thorsville Rectory, just as the short gloomy day was sinking into darkness.

No pony carriage, no familiar face was there to greet me; but after some delay a conveyance was found, into which we scrambled, and were taken slowly but surely to our destination.

Here, again, I found the housekeeper gone, my brother away on his preaching expedition, and no preparations for my arrival. All this I discovered afterwards to be due to the truant propensities of the small page who is entrusted with the postage of my letters.

Feeling rather lonely and very tired, I managed to get some refreshment from a hastily improvised "tea," and then settled myself down by a warm fire to rest till bed time.

"Please, ma'am, could you speak with a man at the door? He wants the master, and says he must see someone."

I followed the housemaid to the porch, and there saw an elderly, rough-looking individual with rather a pleasant, honest-looking face, and a style of demeanor and clothing that suggested a bargeman or one of those watermen so often met with on the canal banks.

"Oh, missus, I wanted to see th' parson. We's in a bit of trouble, and I hears he's main kind to puir folk."

"Well, my man, and what is it you want? He will not be home to-night. Can I do anything for you?"

"Please, missus," was the astounding answer, "can you do a bit of naming? We got a lass in our boat who's mortal bad; and I dunna think the young 'un can last till morning. My old woman, she thinks a deal of that sort of thing, and says that there babby ought to be named at unst, if it's to be of any use."

"Well, my friend," I answered, after settling in my own mind that he meant baptism: "I am afraid I can't do that for you—but perhaps to-morrow will be time enough."

"I s'pose it must be then, ma'm; but I doubts whether either lass or babby will live till sunrise."

Then it flashed through my mind what a dreary place it was to die in, and in a momentary impulse I offered to go and see if I could help either mother or child.

"'Deed, ma'am, if you would come, I'm sure the old 'ooman would be grateful; for this trouble came on us quite unexpected, and her has no food nor nothing fit for the poor critter."

The country round Thorsville was all familiar to me by daylight, and I knew that after crossing two fields, and walking four or five hundred yards up the road, I should then only have to cross a stile to find myself upon the canal bank.

So, after donning a good thick cloak and a warm quilted hood, and filling a basket with such things as I thought might be wanted, I prepared to follow my guide down the canal.

Then, telling the old man who acted as factotum in my brother's household to follow at a distance, I started off.

The two fields grew longer than any four; the stiles seemed impassable barriers; and the road, when we reached it, looked endless, flat, bare, foggy, utterly silent, treeless, save for a few pollards standing here and there like dismal ghosts, with arms uplifted in a warning manner.

How cold I grew! All the sympathy I had felt when standing in the warm, well lighted Rectory porch oozed out at my fingers' ends.

But we Grands are no cowards by training or descent; so I determined to go on, only wishing in my heart that old Thomas wasn't quite so deaf and lame as I knew him to be.

We reached the last stile, and climbing over it I saw the dark barge lying on the canal; a great lumbering object with only one ray of light in a sort of cabin, something below the level of the deck.

Crossing a shaky plank, in rear of my guide, I found myself face to face with an old woman not quite so pleasant looking, and decidedly rougher in manner than my first friend.

"Who be this, Jim?" was a salutation not altogether cheering.

"However, "Jim" told her in a few words who I was, as far as he knew, and then pushing open a little door, she went down a few steps, and ushered me into a small apartment about twelve feet by ten.

There, stretched on a miserable bed, with no covering save an old quilted counterpane and one or two filthy rugs, lay the most lovely girl my old eyes had ever looked upon!

Her small oval face, even in that wretched light, shone out in striking contrast with the sordid surroundings. Her soft hair lay damp and matted on her fair forehead, and the touching expression of hopeless resignation made my heart throb with compassion till I could find no words to speak.

"I'm afraid her's mortal bad," said the woman pityingly, but roughly; "but I think her's sleeping now."

Then, slipping down the coverlid, she went on: "The young 'un won't live an hour." And there, in the girl's arms, was a little waxen image of the mother, but oh! so white and wan, that even my inexperienced eyes knew that the seal of death was upon it.

"Who is she, and what brings her here?" I said, quite sharply, for I felt there could be no kinship between these two women.

"Oh, it's all right, ma'am," she answered in a very reticent manner. "I was just giving her a lift down in the barge, when she was taken ill. I've done the best I could for her."

"But where, and who, are her friends?" I persisted.

"Oh, m'appan they ain't far off;" and as she spoke the girl opened her eyes wide, and I knew by the way she glanced at the woman that she trusted in her, despite the odd surroundings. My fears that she had been subjected to any ill-treatment at their hands subsided at once.

Then, as her glance wandered on to me, I saw a sudden flush sweep over her face, only to die away as quickly to the deathly pallor that had so startled me.

"It's only a kind lady who has come to see you, dearie," said the woman. But as she spoke, I saw the girl was lapsing again into partial unconsciousness, and I knew that if life was to be kept in her she must have proper nourishment at once.

I then mixed her some arrowroot and wine from the store I had brought, and went round to the far side of the bed to lift her head.

As I did so, I noticed very distinctly a red triangular mark upon her throat; not freshly done, but evidently a life mark, but so clearly impressed upon the white skin, that it remained in my mind after many other details of her appearance had passed away.

Lifting her head gently, I fed her with the restorative, spoonful by spoonful, till once more the mist seemed to clear from her eyes, and I knew that she was gazing quietly and steadily at me.

Fearing to excite her, I asked no further questions, but only settled her more comfortably in the bed.

Glancing once again at the still sleeping babe, I emptied my basket of its contents, and quietly drawing the woman outside the cabin door, told her I would return with my brother in the morning, and see what more we could do.

The woman looked at me very earnestly, and just said: "The Lord reward you, ma'am—good night," and so we parted.

She disappeared into the cabin; and I, marching on ahead of old Thomas on my homeward way, wondered who the girl could be, and determined to know all about it next day.

I awoke early, with my mind filled with my strange acquaintances of the night before.

Dressing hurriedly, I proceeded to look out of my travelling trunk what clothing I could spare, and made them up into a small package, not thinking it expedient to tell my maid too much about it till the matter was more fully explained.

Ten o'clock struck, then half past, then eleven, and still William did not come; so being able no longer to curb my impatience I started off again to the canal bank, with Marie carrying the bundle beside me.

When I reached it—lo! no barge was there—not a vestige of anything; save a trampled space on the bank, showing where the old horse had wandered as far as his tether would allow; a few bits of refuse on the canal bank, and a deep indentation in the shelving edge of the grassy towing path!

Perfectly bewildered; half fancying girl, lady, bargee and woman had all been a disordered dream; I retraced my steps to the Rectory, and there poured the whole story into the ears of my returned and half sceptical brother.

He was very kind and sympathetic, but I felt that he thought I had imagined the half of it, and that in reality the lovely girl was an ordinary bargee's daughter, and the trouble one that overtakes them only too often.

* * * * * * *

It was the exhibition year of '51—a time when exhibitions were indeed marvels. That beautiful glass house in Hyde Park was to many the realization of a fairy story; and all who could do so flocked up to London to see if the building large enough to enclose a growing forest tree was indeed to be believed in.

I, too, had a great longing to see this wonder; but when a woman closely borders on seventy years of age, and has spent most of those long years in the seclusion of a country home, she hesitates to trust herself into such a whirlpool as London was that year!

My hesitations, however, were all extinguished by receiving a most pressing invitation from Lady Grand, asking me to spend a week with them—promising me a sight of the exhibition on the opening day—a couple of dinner parties; and that the rest of my visit should be as gay, or as quiet, as I liked to make it.

Never can I forget that opening day! The crowd—the brilliancy—the soul-stirring music—the quaintly-dressed Ambassadors from strange Eastern lands—the universal air of enjoyment and gratification on every face, made the scene one to be not easily forgotten.

Then, again, the sight of our young Queen and her noble husband, filling their exalted position so proudly, and yet so graciously, made my old heart quiver with loyalty, and I prayed God earnestly to bless them with many years of happiness together!

What an endless day it seemed, and how rested I felt when I was once again in the quiet brougham driving back to Chester Square.

"Aunt Deb, we are going to have a lot of nice people to dinner to-night, so be sure and get a good rest before eight o'clock," said my niece. "There is one person, in particular, I want you to see—Sir James Nigel's wife. She is reckoned one of the loveliest women in London this year."

"Is she, Beatrice, dear?" I said differently. "I hope her husband matches her."

"Oh, yes, Auntie, he's good looking enough, but such a racketing, good humored fellow. He's more like a boy than a man, and she is, oh! so quiet and spirituelle-looking. They do make such a funny pair."

"Who was she?" was, of course, my next remark. I have often wandered whether we women would not make that remark if we were introduced to an angel unawares.

"Oh, she's a lady, Aunt Deb, but no one knew much of her till she married. I think an artist's daughter, but certainly an orphan. She had lived for several years with her only living relative, a maiden aunt, who has a pretty little place down in a Shropshire village, where Sir James, before his father's death, used to go for fishing and shooting with a college chum. They are not much in town, for she prefers a country life, and he is devoted to sport of all sort; but when they are up, we see much of them, for Tom and he are great friends."

By this time we had reached No. 90, and I went at once to my room, and gave myself up to a well earned rest, till my maid came in to make preparations for my appearance at dinner.

The drawing-room seemed crowded when I entered, so I sat down near to the door till my niece came round to me bringing an elderly, grave-looking man to be introduced.

When we were fairly settled down in our allotted places at dinner, I began to look about the table, and presently bethought me of her beauty.

But there were so many epergnes and flowers between our vis a vis and ourselves, that for a time I could see little but the crowns of the men's heads, and the elaborate head-gear of the ladies.

The meal slowly dragged itself through and then in a space made by the re-arrangement of one of the large dishes so much in vogue in the year of which I speak, I saw a face. A face that in one instant brought back to my mind with startling distinctness that night scene on the Lincolnshire canal—the dreary coal barge, the sick girl, and the dying babe.

There was the self-same golden curly hair, the deep sparkling eyes, the lovely delicate skin, the broad brow.

And yet, how could it be the same woman? I thought of the simple cotton garment she wore, the miserable bed in which she lay, and then glanced again at the elegant attire of my opposite neighbor.

The pale blue crape dress, the delicate bertha of French lace caught on the shoulder and breast with sprays of pink apple blossoms.

Round her neck a broad black velvet band, with a glittering pendant of opals and diamonds.

My brain seemed to reel with the intensity of my bewilderment. And while I looked, as though my cup of wonder should be filled, I saw her raise her hand, and, evidently a relief from the heat of the crowded room, she lifted the velvet band around her throat, and then with perfect distinctness I noticed the triangular red mark.

I suppose I must have attracted her attention by my earnest gaze, for I saw her grow restless and look at me again and again.

Then as if a curtain had been raised from the past, I saw too, in one instant, that she was present with me in that long-past scene.

At last the weary meal drew to a close, and as I crossed the hall, I heard a voice say very gently: "May I speak to you somewhere?"

Not trusting myself to answer, I led the way to my own room, and there, by the light of the small fire that was burning on the hearth, despite its being May time, we looked at one another in perfect silence, till at last she spoke.

"You remember me?" she said.

"Yes," I answered simply. She was so fair to look at and so good looking, in the highest meaning of the word, that I could not suspect her of evil; and yet what could I say?

"That page in my life's history has become to me a dream," she went on; "a dream from which I thought there was no awakening this side the grave. Why! oh, why should it not remain so? There are none now living, I believe, who know it but you and me. It seems as though I should live through all that misery again

in telling it to anyone."

"My child," I answered gravely: for her six-and-twenty years seemed nothing to me who had passed so many more of life's milestones; "you may rest assured your secret will still only lie between you and me, as far as I am concerned. But, do you do wisely or well to keep such a secret back from your husband? A secret, too, which has in it so many elements of scandal and malice should it become known in any other way."

She stood quite silent for a few minutes with the sad look deepening on her face. Then she turned suddenly and cried out:

"You are right—you are right. I have acted as a fool, and sometimes the weight of it seems to draw me down, and yet I cannot tell my husband, though I love him so dearly. He is so young and so impulsive in character, though really older than myself, that he would never rest till someone was punished for that which can never be repaired. No! I cannot tell anyone. And yet," she went on, lingeringly, "I could not bear that you should think of me with anything but compassion. To you I owed my life that bitter night, when exhaustion and sorrow were slowly sinking me into my grave. I will tell it to you."

So saying, she slid down to the rug at my feet, and shading her face with one hand, holding mine tightly clasped in the other, she told me in a heart-broken manner of the sorrows of her youth.

"My father was a distant member of a noble family; his wife a Hungarian girl whom he loved for her beauty and goodness only.

"While life was sunny and bright for both, he steadily increased in fame as an artist of no mean order.

"But after her death, when I was but two years old, his grief and loneliness were so great amongst a busy world, that he left his old associates and settled down in the lovely Lake country—painting just enough to keep the wolf from the door with the help of a small annuity that came to him from the family estate.

"We had no neighbors save the kindly poor. He educated me solely himself. Constant association with a man of his culture, and life amongst scenery so elevating, taught me much that books could never teach, but I was certainly dreamy and unpractical.

The only visitor I remembered when I began to grow up was a man fifteen years my senior.

He was of genial, pleasant manners, and came from time to time to spend long summers in the village. Being a fellow artist, he ingratiated himself with my father until he became quite an authority in our small household.

"Whether they ever exchanged any confidence as to the reason of their living such secluded lives, I cannot tell. But in course of time he gradually ceased to leave the village at all; and I grew to obey and defer to his opinion as much as I did to that of my father himself.

"Our daily life was so monotonous and simple that I never dreamed of change of any sort, and never thought that anything could occur to break the even tenor of our way.

But ah! my friend, most cruelly was my belief shaken. A day came in which the shining sun had no more warmth for me—the sweet sights and sounds of life fell on deafened ears!

"It was my seventeenth birthday, and we three had planned a drive of many miles to Ullswater Lake, and then a day of boating and sketching.

I, in my excitement at such an unusual excursion, had risen early, prepared the breakfast and planned what preparations old Elizabeth should make for our evening meal, when I thought how slow my father was in coming down.

I ran upstairs, singing as I went, and entering his room, with a jest upon his laziness, I found him—how? Dead! Still and cold just as he had laid himself down to rest. I thought he had fainted.

"Death had never come near to me, and I knew not the strange visitor. True, my girl-mother's death had often been alluded to by him, but in such a simple, tender manner that I only thought of her as just removed one step from us—one step higher on the Jacob's Ladder that reaches from earth to Heaven: God's good angels nearest to Him, and our lost friends just beyond the clouds.

"I cannot now tell you all his departure meant for me. Our home was broken up, and what little fund was realised was to be the means of taking me to an aunt who lived all alone in the wilder parts of Shropshire.

"Then John Verney, who, in the time of emergency, had made all arrangements for me, and whose sympathy and care was so doubly precious in my loneliness, asked me if I was willing to be his wife and continue to live in the north country, which my father's grave made dearer to me than any spot on earth.

"I look back now with wider opened eyes, and wonder how even I, in my utter ignorance of the world's ways, could have agreed so quickly; have consented in two months' time to vow in our little church to be the wife of a man I really knew so little of.

"For another twelvemonth all went well, and I was as happy as I could expect to be considering the ever present sense of my father's loss, when a horrible awakening came to me.

"I found that I was no wife at all. Another woman, years ago, had married him, and to escape her temper and extravagance, he had fled and left her. Long had she sought him.

"And now in this quiet spot, under an assumed name, where he had lived first as our neighbor, and then as my husband, she found him once again.

"Oh! that scene in all its bitterness, how it comes to me again! I listened to their words till my heart stood still to hear, and I fled to my room.

"I remember a dim, instinctive feeling, that now my father's sister was all I had to trust to. Half unconsciously; driven on by some mad impulse, that came I know not how; I gathered together a few of my possessions, emptied my childish money-box of the little hoard that had been accumulating for years, and in the dim twilight stole out from that cottage a girl no longer, but an outraged, despairing woman.

"How the long toilsome journey comes back to me now. I travelled partly on foot, and partly by coach, when such accommodation was to be met with, till I found myself at last on the outskirts of a large town through which a canal ran. On its banks I have still a recollection of resting before I sought a shelter for the night.

"God knows why I chose so dreary a spot for a resting place; but He, in His mercy, brought me rough but honest friends where least I might expect to find them.

"There, on that lonely water's edge, I realised how unfit and unable I was for such a journey. I suppose I must have fainted, for I remembered nothing more till I found myself in the small cabin, which for many more days sheltered me from certain death.

"The old boat woman, with the tenderness of the most noble lady, had seen me there; and guessing, doubtless, from my travel-stained look that I was a stranger in the place, had taken me in and done her best to restore me to consciousness.

"Then I told her as much as I could of my story, and being unable to move I lay there till the tiny babe, which should have been the source of so much joy and thankfulness, was ushered into this world of sorrow amidst these strange surroundings.

"The good old woman told me its hours were numbered, and that if the barge could reach some village in time, she would send for the clergyman and have it duly baptised."

"But why didn't she tell me that, and wait next morning to see what we could do for you?" I said.

"Ah, I can scarcely tell. I remember your face of compassion. And then, in the early dawn, when I was gaining some little strength, I found we had travelled many miles down the canal, as the barge was obliged to reach a certain place by the following day.

"My poor little child had breathed its last, and when we reached the unlading place, she and her husband arranged for its burial in the appointed place in their own names.

"I stayed in their humble home for some week; and then, after giving them all the little sum of money I possessed, save what I needed for my journey to the country town of A——, I left them with my heart full of gratitude for their compassion to a lonely stranger, and found myself in a few hours at my aunt's door.

"How pleased she was to see me, how she recognized me by my likeness to her long estranged brother, it is unnecessary for me to tell you.

"But I could not unburden my heart of all its sorrows. They seemed too deep for words to tell. And she, good kind soul, never inquired very much, thinking I had stayed with friends or neighbors. So the matter sank quietly into oblivion. Her delicacy of health was so great that my presence and service came to her as a priceless boon.

"Amidst new scenes and the quiet, peaceful atmosphere of the invalid's room, the old wounds, that had cut so deeply, slowly healed over.

"Six years slipped away, and then, amongst the circle of friends who brightened our quiet lives, I met my husband. He was to me such a revelation of happy, joyous life, that had known no sorrow or gloom, that my saddened heart seemed to gain fresh life and vigor from his presence. In another year we married, and, to this day, I have never lifted the veil from that dreary past.

"The boatman and his wife I could never hear anything more of. They were both old, and talked of returning that year to Scotland to end their days amongst their own friends.

'Of you, I had but the faintest recollection, never having heard your name; but the good woman told me how the nourishing food and stimulants you brought seemed to give me the power of struggling back to life again."

I had listened to her story almost without comment. It was so strange, and yet not quite improbable; while of the truth—the absolute truth—of every word I could entertain no doubt. Her manner of telling it had truth unmistakably stamped upon it.

I could not, however, refrain from urging her once again most earnestly to seek some opportunity of telling her husband all she had told to me.

For a time my word had no effect. Then, suddenly throwing her arms around me, she said: "I will! I will! I know he loves me dearly; and with your help and testimony, if he likes to prove it all, he can do so."

"Most willingly will I do everything I can for both of you," I answered. "But be sure, too, that my lips are for ever closed on this subject to all the world beside till that day when all secrets shall stand revealed."

From that hour to this I have never seen her again. Whether she ever told her husband, I cannot tell; but this I do know from my niece, that she and Sir James are still all in all to each other—happy in their beautiful home; happy in the possession of children and hosts of friends. May God ever keep her so.

I drop the papers in astonishment. What an odd story. To think of Aunt Deb being dragged into such a romance as this. There must have been something more in the old lady than I ever gave her credit for, or how could she have carried such a secret with her to the grave? I with the more flippant tendencies of the present day, must have found out what was the end of it all—whether she told her husband; whether he ever came across the perfidious Verney—and perhaps I should have ended by creating a disturbance that would have furnished gossip for the society journals for months to come.

I think, however, I still have the grace to see how much nobler and wiser was the reticence of poor Aunt Deb.

WHAT AND WHEN TO DRINK.—"If a man must drink," writes a physician, "the best thing he can take with his meals is a little claret or light wine; and, if he wants something a little stronger, pure whiskey is the best thing he can have.

"The habit of taking a drink early in the morning—I mean by drink a stimulant of that kind commonly called an eye-opener—is one of the worst things that can possibly be done.

"The effect of alcohol is to inflame the stomach; and it will do this even when mixed with food or anything else, and will do so a great deal more when taken on an empty stomach early in the morning. Men should not maintain their strength throughout the day by taking stimulants. To keep up by means of alcohol is very bad, and by-and-by the system will break down entirely under it.

"The best drink that a man can possibly take is milk. Milk, though, is hardly a drink. One can live longer on it than on any one thing. Milk is more nearly a perfect food than anything. It contains more elements that go to build up the system than any other article.

"Early in the morning the best drink to take is water—that is, if one must drink; but, if one can get along without drinking, so much the better.

"Some drink hot water, some cold, and some hot and cold milk. All of these are good in their way. Tea and coffee drunk in moderation will not hurt anybody, although they are both stimulants."

MR. BIPPS—"That medicine I took this morning makes me feel like another man." Mrs. Bipps—"Well, I hope to goodness you are. It is just what I have been wishing for."

Scientific and Useful.

INDIA-RUBBER.—India-rubber is being tried as substitute for asphalt in pavements in Berlin; and the result is said to be good, but expensive.

GILDING.—In gilding the edges of cards, bronze-powder is used, which is applied to the cards in packs by first brushing the edges with a thin size, and, when nearly dry, the powder is applied with a piece of soft chamois or fur.

FLORIDA WATER.—Oil of bergamot, eight ounces; oil of orange, four ounces; oil of lavender (best), three ounces; oil of cloves, one and a half ounce; oil of cinnamon (true), quarter pint; tincture of orris, half pint; tincture of Peru balsam, quarter-pint; alcohol (ninety-five per cent.), four gallons; water, six pints. Mix, and stand for some days before bottling.

FURS.—Fur is a very difficult thing to clean at home, and the operation is generally unsatisfactory. It is recommended by a good authority to heat bran in a frying-pan and brush it well into the fur, and then out again, repeating the process as often as may be necessary. This must have the effect of cleansing it, and, at all events, cannot injure the fur, as some recipes are likely to do.

PAPER AND IRON.—An invention by which writing can be transferred from paper to iron is the work of a Boston man, who has invented a hard ink with which he writes (backward) upon ordinary paper. That paper is placed in a mold, melted iron is poured in, and when the hardened iron is removed it is found that, while the heat burned away the paper, it did not affect the ink, but left the impression of the writing.

UMBRELLAS.—Umbrellas will last much longer if, when they are wet, they are placed handle downwards to dry. The moisture falls from the edges of the frame, and the fabric dries uniformly. If stood handle upwards, as is commonly the case, the top of the umbrella holds the moisture owing to the lining underneath the ring; it consequently takes a long time to dry, and injures the silk or other fabric with which it is covered. This is the main cause of the umbrella wearing out so soon at the top. Umbrella-cases are responsible for the wear of the silk. The constant friction causes tiny holes that appear so provokingly early. When not in use, the umbrella should be left loose, and, when wet, left loose to dry.

Farm and Garden.

THE COST.—The cost of a farm is not the heaviest expense to the beginner. The outlay for horses, cattle, machinery, utensils and extra labor the first year is often more than the cost of the farm.

SEEDS.—Look over the vegetable seeds that are stored away. They should be kept dry, and as mice may destroy them the seeds should be protected by suspending the bags or by inclosing them in a tin box.

WHITEWASH.—Whitewash should be used in order to render the stables cheerful. A light stable is more comfortable than a dark one, and as the lime partially serves to disinfect the building its application should be frequent.

THE BULLS.—Every bull on the farm should be broken to the yoke when it is young and be made to work. There is nothing so efficacious as work for tempering a savage disposition. The bull is dangerous because he is idle and has nothing to do.

KICKING.—Several devices are mentioned from time to time in the papers to prevent cows from kicking. It will not work in every case, but this would frequently be a good remedy: Take the man who handles a heifer and tie both feet together so that he cannot kick; put a gag in his mouth so that he cannot swear, and tie both hands behind his back so that he cannot pinch the heifer's teats. That would keep a good many cows from kicking.

PLANT FOOD.—Plant food in the soil is that which can be utilized by the growing plants, and the more soluble and available the plant food the more rapid the growth of the plants. But the soil may contain unavailable plant food, which may be rendered available by cultivation and the application of fertilizers that assist in changing the combinations of matter. Hence, in using fertilizers they should be credited with the value of their chemical influence in creating available food from that existing in the soil as well as for the plant food they contribute.

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Of Youngest Folks.

A philosopher, who was probably nothing more than a fraudulent and stony-hearted old bachelor, wrote a treatise in which he pretended that no consistent thinker could possibly discover the ultimate uses of babies.

There are moments when this irreverent man's reasoning appeals with a certain sympathetic force to intellects of the feebler type; but we cannot think that he is likely to obtain any permanent hold on the mind of the nation.

Certainly he has earned the resentment of one sex; and, although that sex would probably be labelled as "the weaker" by our philosopher, we imagine he would change his opinion after being interviewed by a deputation of practical matrons.

We, for our part, are determined to take a great question out of the domain of sentiment, and we shall reason on very strict lines, for we know that mankind are divided into two great and influential schools—baby lovers and—well, persons who are not baby lovers.

Let us dispassionately consider the proceedings of baby during the watches of the night. His chief bondsman—his unhappy father—slumbers softly, when through the tumult of dreams an importunate sound pierces. Is it the harmony of argumentative cats in the garden? Is it the unlovely strain of a street musician? Is it the preaching of a demon pack of wild curates? It is none of these—it is baby promulgating his nocturnal edict.

That man may have walked up to an enemy's battery without a tremor; he may be in authority, and regiments—nay, brigades—may tremble at his frown; he may have faced the storm at sea when the maddened deep was but a place of flitting souls; he may be proud, austere, masterful; but what does he do when baby's pleasure is signified? Why, he obeys like a very sheep!

The wild chant of the despot rings through the night; the wretched parent tries sycophancy, coaxing, imploring—every variety of hypocritic device—but his advances are met with musical contumely.

The night-wind plays around him until he imagines that he must have casually exchanged his legs for a pair of wooden ones, his garments flutter in the breeze like complicated flags of truce, and yet he goes on croaking a lullaby under the impression that he is producing very soothing strains, and at last the acute tormentor cunningly feigns sleep. Then the chilled and oppressed man steals towards the cot as if it were a powder magazine and he were Guy Fawkes; his prowl is suggestive of dark deeds; his face is puckered with the lines of deep thought; he deposits his burden with a long sigh of relief, and begins to congratulate himself on his own cleverness.

Brief is his triumph, crushing his woe. The despot was only playing off a little practical sarcasm; he chuckles and makes confidential remarks to himself bearing on such obscure subjects as "Goo, goo!" and "Bah, bah!" and "Ma, ma!"

The trembling parent waits and hopes; but, alas, the time for mere aimless chuckling is soon over—the summoning yell resounds like a clarion, and once more the mournful tramp is resumed, the garments flutter, and the slave goes through his round of deceit and flattery!

By what power does this unconscionable baby thus master the strongest? How does he convert the most leonine of men—warriors, seamen, merchants, politicians—into submissive lambs? This obstinate query we must leave to our philosoper.

When he begins to talk and to imitate the actions of grown-up folk, his power gains an extension—he is the Shah, the Great Tycoon of the domestic circle. He rapturously hails all men as fathers, he promulgates copiously theories concerning the "gee gee," the "bow-wow," the pussy, the sweep, the "policeman," the "pud pud," "papa" and "mamma;" his most reckless speculations must be regarded by the male parent as inspirations, and "mamma" constitutes herself his court historian.

The most soured of philosophers must allow that baby is deliciously funny at this stage; his gait has grown firm and his delightful mottled legs make one laugh as he deliberately strides along.

The school of thinkers opposed to cynicism have plenty to say for themselves; and, while we are not too hard on the insurgents who malign baby, we venture to prefer the other people. For, in all soberness, it must be said that one may well believe unhesitatingly in the divine when he has once watched a mother's face with a pure and discerning eye.

Raphael understood what the holy maternal instinct means; and you may hear your own heart beat as you face the Sistine Madonna, for the inner soul of divine womanhood is made manifest to you.

Baby may be all that the philosopher says he is, but he gives happiness that cannot be reckoned by any modes of computation known to us.

We laugh at our cynic's tale of woe, but we know that it is half pretence, and that in his heart he has a secret kindness lying by down—a kindness that would show itself if baby were in real need.

How the memory of baby, the dear despot, remains with the mothers! An old woman hears that her gallant bearded son is lost at sea or slain in action. You notice that she never thinks of him as a strong man, however she may have loved him and however he may have cherished her. Her mind takes flight over the barrier of years; she bends over little shoes, locks of bright hair, tattered nursery books.

She does not remember the strong man very vividly, but her heart yearns to the helpless babe that clung to her breast and murmured pretty incoherences in her ear.

You will see very old women going regularly time after time to the churchyard to look on some tiny mound that the years have clothed with thick greenery. It may be that half a century has passed since the little mound first lay brown and dolorous under the sky; but the tiny sleeper below is still alive to the mother's faithful heart. She can hear little prattlings; she can remember when baby crowed in her arms and greeted his father so noisily; she thinks of soft sweet evenings long ago when the pet babbled in the firelight at her feet. Her love is immortal, and stern men grow tender when they remember the happy unthinking early days.

We have had our fun out of poor baby, but it is that kindly, half-tearful fun which trembles on the verge of sentiment. In serious truth, we know that the world would be blank but for the love of children.

We adore our dear helpless despot; we luxuriate in his exactions; we learn from his weakness to use our own strength gently, and his presence sanctifies the dark ways of life for us.

Many mothers will read our words; they must cultivate charity, and forgive our snarling philosopher. Perhaps after all the old philosopher's mischievous grin only makes our love sweeter by contrast.

Moreover, we cannot wholly love any individual unless we can sometimes laugh at him, and the very fact that we can laugh at King Baby rivets the chains of affection on us and makes us kindlier and, let us hope, better.

TO PERCEIVE where is wrong is the only sure way of reaching the right. Every time an error is corrected, a delusion banished, a deficiency supplied, a fault overcome, progress is made, and he who makes it occupies a higher plane than before. But for this result is is needful that he freely admit and acknowledge his error, otherwise he cannot abandon it. Instead of being ashamed to do this, he should be ashamed to hide it and to pretend he has not erred. And those to whom such candid confession is made will, if they are wise and kind, offer help and encouragement instead of scorn or censure, thus aiding instead of crushing the good work.

THE wheel of life whirls round, and we whirl with it, excepting that the motion will some day slacken, and that then life may be ordered anew and omissions may be made good. But real wisdom consists in seeing the flying moment and in pressing upon it the seal of the eternal and the enduring: that is the great course of moral endeavour under which life receives its due form, like the block of marble under the hand of the sculptor. The eternal and the enduring here on earth consist in the morally artistic use of time.

"WE choose our friends, not our relatives," has become a trite saying; but that is hardly a good reason for turning upon those to whom Fate has also denied any voice in the choice of ourselves, and, without perhaps a thought of the pain we may be inflicting, trampling upon their tenderest feelings, their most delicate scruples, and their dearest hopes and aspirations with a ruthless brutality that can be excused only on the ground so often given that "we never guessed they would mind so much."

SELF DEPENDENT habits may be acquired Cowards by nature have reasoned themselves ere now into a philosophic indifference to danger, and even the changeable man, whose mind has in a measure lost its identity, and is accustomed to take for the time being the hue of every mind with which it comes in contact, may learn to resolve and execute on his own responsibility.

IT is impossible to say absolutely of most men's merits or talents and performances that they are either great or small, save in comparison with those of others. A few men, when they think of themselves, in voluntarily glance upwards; the majority look downwards, and are naturally pleased at the elevation they enjoy.

IN early childhood the germs of fraternal affection may be so carefully nourished as to bear a rich harvest of fruit through all the succeeding years of life. Love is not wholly a matter of instinct or accident, as some may imagine; its presence is often due to cultivation, its absence to neglect.

THE great high-road of human welfare lies along the old highway of steadfast well doing; and they who are the most persistent and work in the truest spirit will invariably be the most successful. Success treads on the heels of every right effort.

GET health, writes Emerson; no labor, pains, temperance, poverty, nor exercise that can gain it must be grudged. For sickness is a cannibal which eats up all the life and youth it can lay hold of and absorbs its own sons and daughters.

PROBITY, independence, unselfishness, tender regard for the feeling of others, and a hearty hatred for whatever is mean, tricky, vulgar, or profane—these are among the qualities that distinguish the true gentleman.

A DISCONTENTED man is shunned by all; while a contented one becomes a magnet of attraction around which everything that has life in it gathers just for the pleasure of borrowing a little of his sunshine.

IF we are ever in doubt what to do, it is a good rule to ask ourselves what we shall wish on the morrow that we had done.

SCHOOL discipline rightly carried out is as vital to the future good of the child as the lessons he learns.

POSITIVE men are often in error.

The World's Happenings.

A Bowery museum advertises the "biggest dwarf" in the world.

Three million gallons of wine were shipped from California to the East this year.

Prunes are a very profitable crop in California. One grower expects to get $11,000 for his crop.

A doll is being exhibited at Leipsic which possesses the faculty of writing legible letters and sentences.

Ex King Milan of Servia receives $5000 a month from Servia and $2000 a month from the Emperor of Austria.

An oyster house in New York bears this sign on its closed shutters: "In summer the Oyster must have a rest."

The territory acquired by England in Africa by her treaty with Germany is estimated at 250,000 square miles.

Emperor William has succeeded in reducing the time occupied by the most elaborate State banquet to 25 minutes at most.

Electric cars are said to be such a success at Stuttgart, Germany, that the cab horse will be transferred to some other field of usefulness.

During the last heated spell workmen removed a street rail at Reading, and it expanded so much that it could not be put back into place.

A story comes from Stratford, Conn., that an enterprising colt there the other day chewed up a man's vest and several hundred dollars in the pockets thereof.

The future medical degrees in the Czar's dominions will be conferred only upon women who have studied in Russia. No woman is to practice publicly before 40 years of age.

New York's new aqueduct, according to the World, is 30 miles long; cost $22,000,000, and 30 lives were lost in its construction. It brings 318,000,000 gallons of water to New York daily.

A project is on foot for spanning the Danube canal, in Vienna, with a bridge lined with shops, after the model of the famous Ponte Rialto, at Venice, and the Arno bridge at Florence.

A poor washerwoman at Fayetteville, Ark., who a few days ago was notified that she had been granted a pension and would receive $5000 back pay, was so overcome with joy that she died.

Domestic servants are so scarce in Montreal that women in want of help are said to visit the jail with a view to engaging young women to work for them at the close of their terms of imprisonment.

The electrical machine used in counting the census is a great labor saver, says a Washington despatch, but it has the peculiarity that it never counts the same pile of returns twice with the same result.

Sparrows in Springfield, Mass., are not easily discouraged. They build nests in the electric light globes, and though the nests are destroyed about every second day by linemen, the birds return and build them again.

At a recent wedding pretty little silver brooches were given to the bridesmaids in the form of a large hook and eye, connected, with the initials of the bride on one and those of the bridegroom on the other, with the date.

A peculiar industry of Kern county, Cal., is the collection and shipment of horned toads. They are sold to the Chinese, who use them for medicinal purposes. They are considered especially valuable in the treatment of rheumatism.

All through New Mexico Arizona, some parts of Colorado and also in old Mexico no rain has fallen for months, and thousands upon thousands of range cattle are lying dead in the parched valley and thousands more are dying for want of grass and water.

Charlie Jackson, an 8-year-old lad of Marlboro, Mass., lately picked up a pocket-book containing $15,000 in gold certificates and checks. He found the owner—a sea-captain—soon after, and, returning the pocket-book to him, was handsomely rewarded.

An amateur scientific student at Wakefield, Mass., planted a potato in a little dirt on the top of a factory, 40 feet from the ground, to see if the potato beetle would find the plant. It has found it, and now the amateur wants to know whether the beetle is a bird or a fly.

At Neuendorf, Prussia, the lightning fired the gable end of a barn where a pair of storks had built their nests for years. The flames soon caught the nest in which the brood was screaming, but the mother stork, refusing to leave, spread her wings over the young ones and was burnt alive.

The greatest steeple climber in England is said to be William Green. He has repaired 50 or more steeples and spires, and is sent for from all parts of the kingdom. His great achievements have been in repairing the spire of Salisbury Cathedral, 404 feet high; Louth, Lincolnshire, 350 feet; Grantham, 320 feet, and a steeple in Cambridgeshire, 280 feet.

An Eastern contemporary tells of a young man who was practicing on a sliding trombone, at home, when the thought struck him that he would like to see how he would look playing in a band. So he stood up in front of the mirror and began. The first slide he made, the end of the trombone went through the mirror, smashing the glass into many pieces. The young man's ardor was completely cooled, and he is now willing to wait and let some one else judge how he looks as he goes marching on.

A clever swindle is being practiced in Stamford, Conn., by means of a double fountain pen, one end of which is filled with good substantial ink, the other with ink that fades away in a day or two. The sharper writes his agreement, contract, or whatever particular lay he may have chosen, with the ink that fades, and his victim signs with the other end of the pen in the ink that lasts. In a few days the swindler has a slip of paper with nothing on it but a good signature, over which he writes any sort of a note that he can most easily turn into ready cash.

CASTLES IN THE AIR.

BY SHIRLEY WYNNE.

Height after height they rise,
Made of the splendor of the morning skies,
Castles whose flashing walls and portals deep
All fairest treasures keep—

So bright, so beautiful,
That, looking on them, earth's best gifts seem dull
And poor to those who in the lustrous skies
See those fair castles rise.

And yet, alas, alas,
Frailer are they than woof of gauze or glass!
One shadow, one faint breath of wind alone—
They are for ever gone!

A Dangerous Guest.

BY W. HARDEN.

"CONFOUND the Comte de Rocheville!" exclaimed Jack Thorne impatiently, throwing down the letter which he had just opened and read.

"With all my heart, dear boy!" returned Rochester, glancing up with an amused smile from his newspaper, his red round face looking as bright as the morning sun. "But who on earth is the Count de Rocheville?"

They were seated at breakfast—Jack, a tall handsome young fellow of twenty-five, attired with careful elegance, and the other, a huge ungainly man of about forty, arrayed, with characteristic regard for comfort, in a dressing gown of prodigious dimensions.

"Oh! Where did they pick him up?"

"At Nice, of all places! He was staying at the same hotel; and, according to my mother's graphic account, it was entirely owing to his fearlessness and pluck that Edith did not perish in her bed on the night the place was burned down. It appears she was overlooked in the panic, and was missed only when all hope of rescue seemed gone. But this precious Count, hearing how matters stood, without a word rushed into the blazing building, and, after a terrific struggle with the smoke and flames, returned, scorched and blackened beyond recognition, bearing Edith, enveloped in a blanket, senseless but unharmed. I don't wish to rob him of a single leaf of his laurels; but, confound it, I can't help feeling uneasy!"

"But you've not even seen the fellow yet!" observed Rochester, elevating his eyes in mild surprise and amusement.

"No, I know I have not; but I've heard enough about him. Since making his acquaintance my parents' letters have had but one refrain—the Comte de Rocheville—his handsome face and form, the fascination and elegance of his manner and conversation, from the mater; his thoughtfulness, usefulness, and charming amiability from the governor; while Edith—"

"Oh, yes—while Edith?" echoed Rochester satirically.

"Hang it, she has never even mentioned his name!"

"A dangerous symptom that!"

"Of course it is!" assented Jack, pacing the room in gloomy agitation. "The governor is such a generous easy-going old brick that he never suspects anybody; while the mater is as romantic as any school-girl, and a bandie to one's name covers, to her eyes, a multitude of blemishes and makes everything couleur de rose. For all they know of this Count's antecedents, he may be the most abominable rone in existence! I quite understand that they should feel grateful to the fellow, and all that sort of thing; but to allow him to dangle after them wherever they went while abroad and throw him in the way of a naturally romantic and impressionable girl was most injudicious. To bring him home with them and make him one of the family——"

"What—one of the family?" Are they married already?" asked Rochester, looking as serious as the proverbial judge.

"Married?" cried Jack, aghast at the bare idea. "Good heavens, what are you talking about? Come—do be serious! I'm awfully troubled and vexed at the advent of this Count!"

"Very likely. It is decidedly provoking and unpleasant to have one's nose put out of joint either physically or metaphorically," returned Rochester, in his good-naturedly satirical way. "The fact is, my dear boy, these good people at home have so petted and idolised you that it quite astonishes your serene highness that they should admire and make a fuss of anybody else. Really I can't see what cause you have for being so disquieted! It is true that Edith happens to be an heiress; but, for all you know to the contrary, the Count may be the paragon of virtue they fancy him and altogether a most desirable parti. He saved her life; and, if she loves him—"

"Loves him?" interjected Jack abruptly.

"Yes, if she loves him, what then?"

"Why, then I am the most miserable wretch alive; for I love her—how dearly and truly I never knew till now! Oh, Rochester, old fellow, I have been an awful fool! You know how they've spoiled me at home, gratifying my every whim and fancy and making my word law. With Edith it has been the same. We were ever together as children, and loved each other as brother and sister—I ruling and domineering, she submitting and obeying with unquestioning compliance. I was always her hero, and received her homage as my due. As we grew up the relations between us remained the same; and, while she was always at my call, I never knew how much she was to me. But during her absence the truth has been dawning upon me; and, now that another seeks to win her and she is lost to me, I awake to the bitter knowledge that I love her earnestly and truly, and that she is all the world to me."

Rochester glanced at the handsome downcast face opposite to him, and thought how strange it was that this self-satisfied young dandy, who justly prided himself upon his imperturbable self-possession, should now be as tremulous and dejected as any love-sick schoolboy.

"Come! are we going to haul down our colors before a shot has been fired? Never!" he exclaimed, in deep melodramatic tones, striking an attitude so comical that Jack was forced to smile. "You're taking too much for granted! Why not run down and reconnoitre? I'll be bound there's a hearty welcome awaiting you!"

"And you too, my dear old comforter! The mater writes no end of civil things about you. She says you can work just as well there as here, if work you must, and will take no refusal."

"I shall be delighted! I've been promising myself a few days' change; and I dare say I can arrange matters."

"What a good fellow you are, Rochester!" cried Jack impulsively, wringing his friend's hand, and feeling wonderfully relieved and hopeful; for experience had taught him that hopeless indeed was the difficulty which Rochester could not somehow or other get him out of.

A truer friend, a wiser counsellor, a better fellow hardly breathed than this broad-shouldered warm-hearted giant. Years before he had been called to the Bar; but, finding briefs far from numerous, he had drifted into the "great republic of letters," of which he was now a bright and prominent member. When, upon leaving college, Jack became an aspirant for wig and gown, Rochester took him under his wing and shared his chambers with him in the Temple.

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"Well, Rogers, how are you?" inquired Jack of a rosy-cheeked corpulent old man, attired in the Thorne's unpretentious livery, who came panting up to the two young men as they alighted that evening at the pretty little station of Singlemarch.

"Thank ye, Master Jack, sir—'ceptin' a touch of the gout, I mustn't grumble," returned the old man, his small blue eyes twinkling with pleasure and simple admiration as he regarded his young master's tall graceful figure. "I'm pleased to see you lookin' so well, sir!" he added, touching his hat to Rochester.

"Thank you, Rogers! I'm not at all well; I'm very delicate!" returned that gentleman, with a deep drawn sigh that sent the old man into a fit of convulsive laughter.

"What became of Pansy?" demanded Jack, with a frown, on finding another horse in the dog-cart instead of the favorite mayor which he always used.

"Very sorry, Master Jack, sir" apologised Rogers, who was stowing away the luggage; but, you see, she's out with Miss Ethel and the Count——"

"You observe, their names are already coupled together!" said Jack bitterly, turning to his friend. "At one time I should have found Edith here, delighted and impatient, awaiting my coming. Now she thinks so little about me that she takes the very horse she knows is kept for me."

"You see, Master Jack, sir," explained the old man, as they started off, "we didn't get your telegram until Miss Edith and the Count——"

"Oh, confound the Count!" growled Jack impatiently.

"Beggin' your pardon, sir, I agree with you!" returned Rogers earnestly. "I don't like this furriner. Not that he isn't civil and smooth enough; but, what with his quiet soft-soapery way and his big eyes which seem to fas'nate you like, he 'pears to get you under his thumb without you knowing it. Beggin your pardon, Master Jack, sir, I think that's what he's doing with e'm all at the Court yonder; and the fuss that's made of him is somethink awful!"

The old servant gossipped on with the privileged loquacity of old age; but, eliciting nothing but brusque monosyllables in return from Jack, who was absorbed in gloomy meditation and harassed by a host of jealous, anxious fears, he addressed himself to Rochester, whose ponderous form adorned the back seat, and found in him an indulgent and amused auditor.

Langleigh Court, whither they were driving, was situated in one of the most lovely parts of Hampshire. It stood, a grand old ivy-clad building with projecting mullioned windows and queer octagonal turrets, in the centre of a richly-wooded park in hollow ground encircled with verdant hills.

Its master, Squire Thorne, was a perfect type of the middle-aged country gentleman, and its mistress was a worthy consort for so worthy a man.

Jack was their only child. He was sent them some years after their marriage, when all hope of offspring—for which they earnestly yearned—had departed. In their joy and natural warm-heartedness they made him their idol, and fortunately had little cause to regret it.

Edith Reynard, their niece, was left an orphan and consigned to their willing care when a little child, and she soon even rivalled Jack in their affection.

The Squire and his wife were in the hall to meet the new arrivals—and warm and hearty was their greeting.

"And where is Edith?" asked Jack, with well-feigned carelessness.

"I have had to scold her and the Comte de Rocheville," replied his mother, with a self complacent smile.

"They have been for a drive together, and have only just returned. Now be quick and dress, for dinner is waiting!"

"Dear, dear Jack! How pleased I am you've come!" cried Edith, as he and his friend entered the drawing room a little later, hastening forward with both hands extended, her bright animated face and sparkling eyes confirming her words.

"It seems ages to me since I saw your dear old face!"

"And to me an eternity!" he replied, in a low constrained tone and with a forced smile.

He took her hands in his and gazed with kindling eyes and violently beating heart into her upturned face.

He observed at a glance how the short time which had elapsed since they parted had added grace and rounded elegance to her figure and increased the charm of her sweet girlish face.

A thrill of mingled pleasure and regret ran through him. A few months since he would have greeted her with boisterous brotherly freedom—rough unceremonious hugs and kisses—or, if it pleased his lordly will, with lofty condescension and indifference. Now her beauty dazzled him, and her voice, her very touch, agitated him strangely.

He could not trust himself to speak, and without a word he bowed his head and kissed her gently and coldly. She looked up into his face in wondering surprise. There was something in his earnest eyes which startled her and made her fair cheeks flush with confusion.

"This is a great pleasure, Mr. Rochester," she said, turning to that gentleman—"your visits to us poor country-folk are unfortunately so few and far between. By-the-bye we have been reading your last book, and find it simply delightful."

"Since that is so, my dear Miss Raynard, what more can I desire?" returned Rochester, with an awkward bow, beaming upon her with undisguised admiration.

"This, my dear Count, is our son Jack," said Mrs. Thorne; "and this, Jack, is our esteemed friend the Comte de Rocheville."

"An introduction seems scarcely necessary, for to me we seem old acquaintances—thanks to my mother's recent letters," said Jack, with an effort at politeness which ended in an unequivocal sneer.

"I take this the first opportunity of expressing my admiration and grateful appreciation of your gallantry——"

"Desist, I beg of you!" cried the Count, speaking with a slight accent, and in a calm musical tone.

"It was really nothing! Besides, who would not risk a thousand dangers to rescue such a prize?" he added, with a bow and a glance at Edith which made Jack long to punch his head.

During this colloquy Rochester examined the Count in a leisurely critical way, and a strange expression of mild perplexity stole over his face.

"Handsome—yes, a decidedly handsome, distinguished looking individual this Count," he mused—"tall and graceful, thin and wiry; a striking face, splendid eyes—could melt in love and flash in war. I should think; finely modelled nose; firm resolute jaw; complexion delicate and fair as any woman's, and uncommon and remarkable with that raven black hair and moustache! Yes, a fascinating face, calm and well-controlled, but capable of the fiercest passions—a face once seen not likely to be forgotten; yet it seems strangely familiar—dimly, distantly familiar—though different——"

Rochester was roused from his speculations by hearing his name pronounced, and found he was being introduced to the Count.

"I'm charmed to make the acquaintance of so distinguished a litterateur, whose clever writings it has been my advantage to read lately and, perhaps needless to say, admire," said the Count, in quiet measured tones, extending his hand with charming suavity.

Rochester was saved the trouble of replying beyond a bow, for dinner was at that moment announced.

They were a merry little party. Jack, simulating a cheerfulness which he was far from feeling, joined in the conviviality, and made himself sufficiently agreeable to avoid remark. Strive as he would however, he could not keep his eyes from wandering to Edith and the Count, who were seated side by side. He jealously noted every glance and whisper that they exchanged, how her cheeks flushed when the foreigner addressed her, and how she listened to his brilliant conversation with sparkling eyes and unconsciously displayed admiration. The more he watched them, the more dejected he became.

It was a fair balmy evening, and, dinner over, they all went on to the old moss-grown terrace. The moon had risen before they re-entered the house; but Edith and the Count lingered behind.

"How lovely the night is!" she said softly, as they sauntered up and down.

"All nature seems hushed—quiet as a nun rapt in adoration."

"What a beautiful simile," he replied dreamily. "This is a lovely spot. Were I an artist I would paint the scene and call it 'Rest.' I have been very happy here. Miss Raynard—strangely happy and at rest," he added, in a low tone, after a brief pause.

"I have never understood the soul stirring charm of your English word 'home' till now. I have always been a wanderer, with neither kith nor kin—often without a friend—a roving, homeless Bohemian, taking life as I found it and living only for the day. But I've caught a glimpse of Paradise—of a higher, better life. Can I ever be content with the old life again?" He shrugged his shoulders and sighed. "When I leave the calm and peace of this happy English home amid the trees and hills, and return to the restless turmoil of the world—when I go away——"

He felt the little hand upon his arm tighten its grasp. He looked into her flushed face eagerly and wistfully, and what he saw there made his eyes gleam brilliantly and his heart beat high.

"Have you tired of us so soon that you speak of leaving us already?" she asked, with forced raillery.

"Tired of you, Miss Raynard? Oh, no that is impossible!" he returned in a quiet unemotional manner, yet bending his eager face so close to hers that she felt his breath upon her cheek. They had stopped at a secluded spot and stood leaning over the balustrade.

"I count the very moments, and regret their fleeting. Oh, it were a thousand times better that we had never met!" he cried, with sudden passion. "Yet, like the dazzled moth, I have stayed fluttering around the alluring flame. Forgive me! I will go away——"

"But why? I—I don't understand!" she faltered, bewildered by his mysterious words.

"Because I love you!" he whispered hoarsely, all his habitual calmness, vanishing and giving place to vehement passion and excitement.

"You have bewitched me, enslaved me—I know not what! Your sweet angel's face haunts me waking or sleeping! I tremble at your coming; your voice, your touch, the very rustling of your dress thrills me as nothing has ever done before. I am mad—nay, worse than mad—to tell you; but you must—you shall hear me, though you spurn me from your side. I love you desperately, though my love is the greatest degradation I could offer you——"

"Oh, no—a thousand times no!" she exclaimed wildly, distracted by a whirl of

confused emotions. "I am unworthy of such love; but I love you more than I can tell!"

He gazed at her in a dazed hesitating way, and then, as if moved by a sudden impulse, clasped her to him, and, with a torrent of impassioned, incoherent terms of endearment, showed kisses upon her.

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"Poor dear boy! It's hard lines for him!" said Rochester to himself, after closing his door on Jack, who had unbosomed himself in his usual impulsive way. "It's mighty provoking; for she's a charming girl, as gentle and good as she's beautiful. I'm afraid the youngster is quite out of the hunt; for, if ever a woman loved a man, she loves this Count; while he undemonstrative and inscrutable as he is, worships her. By the look of her pretty face when they came in from the terrace I fancy they have settled it between them. My excellent host and hostess evidently know little or nothing about him, and are blissfully ignorant of what is going on. The profound attention and respect they pay him are certainly amusing; and he has so completely won their warm grateful hearts that he evidently has it all his own way with them. An exceedingly pleasant gentlemanly fellow is the Count—very superior to the ordinary run of his class, with their theatrical display and hollow sentiment! What an extraordinary face his is! Yes—yes——" Rochester paused as he held the extinguisher over the candle, and an expression of perplexity again came over his face; but, with a gesture of impatience, he put out the light and got into bed.

Long after the others were asleep the Comte de Rocheville sat at the open window of his room busily thinking.

"The die is cast! It's a bold throw full of danger!" he muttered. "But the stakes are high and worth the winning. Yet, if I fail—ten, what has come over me? What have I to fear? No one suspects. Who could suspect here, far away from the world—my world at least? I am safe here. She loves me—she is mine! I have put away the past, and the future is clear. With her as my wife—my wife——"

He started and smiled at the words, and repeated them softly and tenderly as a maiden repeats her lover's name.

They changed the nature of his reflections; and, when dawn broke, it found him still dreaming of the future awaiting him with Edith Raynard as his wife.

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"A fine stroke that, Count! You're a very pretty player, I perceive!" remarked Rochester, who was lounging lazily in a rocking chair at the open window of the billiard-room, enjoying his morning pipe after a late breakfast, and dividing his attention between the *Times* and the billiard table, where the Count, practising, was displaying extraordinary skill.

The Squire, accompanied by Jack, had driven off some hours before to attend an important sale of horses; and, the ladies being occupied with their domestic duties, the two gentlemen were left to spend the morning as they choose.

"Yes, I play a fairly good game when in practice," acknowledged the Count carelessly.

A silence ensued, broken only by the clicking of the ivory balls and the buzzing of the bees as they hovered about the flowers outside.

The Count glanced towards his companion, whose head and shoulders were concealed by the open newspaper, and wondered at his sudden silence.

Rochester's attention had been arrested by a name in the newspaper. He sat staring at it with knitted brow, as though it were some difficult problem. Suddenly his brow cleared, and his small keen eyes regarded the Count's face searchingly.

"Solved at last, by Jingo!" he muttered. "Here's a pretty kettle of fish!"

"You appear to be much interested, *mon ami*," remarked the Count presently, with an amused smile. "Any news of importance?"

"No—nothing of general importance," replied Rochester from behind the newspaper. "A particular item attracted my attention. By the-by, it may interest you, as it comes from Paris!"

"From Paris, eh?" returned the Count nonchalantly. "Another *coup d'état*, I suppose, or a cold-blooded murder, or——"

"No—not exactly. It refers to a notorious forger and swindler."

The Count started slightly, and, pausing in the act of taking aim with his cue, raised his head and directed an uneasy inquiring glance at Rochester.

"Do you know, Count, criminals, with their clever ways, have a great attraction for me, and afford, I find, a most instructive and interesting study," continued Jack's friend, with a winning smile, as he smoothed out the newspaper upon his knee. "We knights of the pen are indebted to them for many a thrilling incident and ingenious plot. You have seen much of the world, and no doubt take a great interest in criminal matters—of course I mean as a study of human nature?"

"That is so," returned the Count quickly, smiling as he carefully chalked his cue. "But what's the news from Paris?"

"The news? Oh, yes—here it is!" said Rochester carelessly. "The Paris correspondent writes—'It is rumored that Jules Rougebolt,'—the Count flinched as though from a blow, but the next moment continued his practice, though with a trembling, erring hand—'whose clever capture I related a few days since, has, in the face of the overwhelming evidence against him, confessed his complicity in the series of forgeries on one of the principal banking-houses here. It will be remembered that the affair caused a great sensation at the time, and that it was conducted with such consummate skill and boldness as to defy detection for a considerable period. It is reported that Rougebolt has made a full confession, giving the names of his accomplices, at whose head was the notorious André Dalmais.'"

A half stifled exclamation burst from the lips of the Count. His face was ashy pale and quivering with evil passion.

The cue dropped from his grasp, and, with tightly clenched hands and flashing eyes, he stood for a few moments quite motionless; then, with a startling suspicious glance at his companion—who, he found, had paused only to pull vigorously and composedly at his pipe—he picked up the fallen cue, and, with admirable self command, sauntered to the mantlepiece and calmly lighted a cigarette.

"'At whose head was the notorious André Dalmais,'" pursued Rochester, reading leisurely, as he rocked to and fro, apparently quite unconscious of his auditor's mysterious perturbation. "'The authorities are exceedingly reticent regarding the matter; but it is believed that, thanks to Rougebolt, they have a clue to Dalmais's whereabouts. At all events, M. Lafaire, their most experienced and astute detective, has left for England, presumably upon his track.' That's all," concluded Rochester, rising abruptly, as for the first time fixing his eyes upon the Count.

"An every day incident, *mon ami*," remarked the Frenchman lightly, raising his eyebrows in mild surprise, and carelessly shaking off the ash of his cigarette.

"Yes; but it has a peculiar interest for me. I know this Andre Dalmais," returned Rochester quietly, still gazing fixedly upon the Count, who raised his eyes in a quick searching glance, then dropped them again.

"A charming acquaintance, one would imagine!" he said, smiling.

"Oh, yes—charming enough, no doubt, till one found him out!" rejoined Rochester, as he paced leisurely up and down the room with both hands thrust into the pockets of his shooting-jacket. "The first time I saw him was in the dock when on his trial for the mysterious murder of a certain well-known infamous woman—a murder which, you will no doubt remember, was the talk of the town for a time. I was acting as special correspondent in Paris for one of our dailies just then, and attended the trial from its commencement. Whether he was guilty of the crime I could never make up my mind; but I fancy not. However, thanks to his handsome person, his cool insinuating manner, and the eloquence of a popular advocate, he was acquitted, only to be tried and convicted for a series of daring ingenius frauds which his trial had brought to light. The fellow was bad and worthless beyond doubt; yet somehow or other, he interested me strangely, and I learned much concerning him. He was a gentleman by birth and education; but, squandering his small fortune in reckless extravagance, he had sunk lower and lower, from a gambler to Heaven knows what. I've a wonderful memory for faces," resumed Rochester, after a brief pause, stopping abruptly before the Count with a bland innocent smile, but a hard resolute look in his eyes—"I can see this Dalmais before me now."

The Count met Rochester's penetrating gaze without flinching, and puffed the smoke calmly from his cigarette. The next moment he shifted uneasily, and would have turned away; but Rochester, with an insinuating smile, button-holed and gently detained him.

"Yes—I can see this Dalmais before me now," he repeated. "But, when I saw him last in Paris, his hair was what our lady-novelists call rich sunny chestnut; and so was the fine beard that he wore then. His self command was really extraordinary; but I remember that, when agitated—say, by an awkward bit of evidence—he had an odd habit of resting his chin upon his hand and gently stroking his throat with his thumb and finger."

Rochester's eyes were fixed significantly upon the Count's slender hand, which was performing the peculiar action he described.

With a start the hand was dropped and clenched; but the Frenchman, though unusually pale and dangerous looking, lounged easily against the mantlepiece, and blew composedly a cloud of smoke from a fresh cigarette with the air of a polite mildly amused listener.

"Depraved and reckless as this Dalmais had become," continued Rochester, as he thoughtfully reloaded his pipe, "his character was not without its good points. During his trial many were the romantic stories told about him, illustrative of his staunchness as a friend, his love of little children and of animals, his gentleness and open-handed generosity to the needy and distressed; and of course he was credited with being the hero of many an *affaire d' honneur*. It was said, I remember, that he carried a lifelong memento of one of these encounters in the shape of a bullet embedded just about there!"

With a quick movement the Englishman's powerful hand was upon the other's shoulder, pressing it firmly. An expression of acute pain passed over the Count's face, but not a sound escaped his compressed lips.

"A thousand pardons, my dear fellow, if I hurt you!" said Rochester, with an air of great concern. "I touched a tender spot perhaps!"

The Count did not reply, but went to the open window and thoughtfully looked out; while Rochester watched him curiously and attentively.

"You know this Andre Dalmais?" said the Count presently, in a quiet steady tone.

"Do you think he is likely to be caught—to allow himself to be caught—like a rat in a trap?"

"Decidedly not. Unless he has grown reckless and foolhardy, he, being warned in time, will get away as soon as he can—say, to-night—without arousing suspicion or causing a scene," replied Rochester, walking to the door.

"And you would not betray him, supposing of course you were in a position to do so?"

"I think not—out of consideration for my friend's peace of mind."

Their eyes met, and they seemed to understand each other.

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When Edith retired to the seclusion of her room that night, she found abundant food for meditation. The fierceness of her passion for the Comte de Rocheville astonished and alarmed her.

From their first meeting this melancholy distinguished-looking man had powerfully impressed her romantic imagination, and so fascinated her that she seemed to know no will but his.

He was noble, gentle, and brave, she thought—worthy of a woman's love and trust. Yet why did grim uneasy doubts haunt her? He loved her passionately, she was sure; yet the knowledge brought her no gladness or pride, but filled her with a strange shrinking dread.

Her thoughts dwelt upon his wild mysterious talk, his reticence concerning his past, and, strive as she would, she could not suppress the vague suspicions which arose in her mind.

Then she thought of his conduct that day—how worn and absent minded he had looked, how he had obviously avoided her, how, when he wished her "good night," he had retained her hand and looked into her face in a way that startled and perplexed her.

Then one incident recurred to her with a startling significance which had not impressed her at the time.

She remembered that after luncheon she had come upon him unawares in the library reading a newspaper with painful eagerness; that, when she had playfully laid her hand upon his shoulder, he had started as though frightened, and turned a wild-looking white face towards her; and that, when she had picked up the paper, he had hurriedly snatched it from her hands. What was he reading?

In her morbidly excited state of mind she could not rest. She must, she would see for herself! The next minute he had her room and was creeping down the ghostly old staircase to the library, where she knew she would would find the journal filed.

The girl pause at the door, which she found ajar, startled for a moment by a strange noise like the rustling of papers which came from the room. Reassured by the conjecture that the servants, tendered careless by long security, had left the window open, she entered noiselessly.

With a violent start she stopped abruptly; for in the corner of the room she saw a man kneeling at the open strong-box.

She would have shrieked, but her throbbing heart seemed to be suffocating her, and she stood watching the stealthy figure as if petrified with terror.

Presently it arose, and the clear moonbeams streaming through the open window disclosed to her the face of the Comte de Rocheville.

With her eyes fixed upon him, the gilded towards the Count as if attracted by some indomitable fascination; while he stood motionless as a statue, regarding her as though she were an apparition.

"Victor!" she gasped. She would have seized his arm, but he recoiled from her. "Victor! Oh, what does this mean?"

He continued to look at her in the same stupefied incredulous manner, as if he had not heard her. Then, passing his hand across his face, he seemed to rouse himself as if for a great effort.

"You ask what it means?" he said, in a hoarse hurried whisper, averting his face from her pleading eyes. "Look at that rifled safe! Does it not speak for itself?"

"I—I don't understand!" she exclaimed faintly. "Oh, if you love me——"

"Love you!" he echoed, in tones of passionate derision and scorn which contrasted strangely with the expression of agony on his white quivering face. "You are credulous to a fault! I did not come here for love of you or even your money, but for the security this quiet unfrequented place afforded. It has served my purpose; but I am discovered, and you find me, the noble immaculate Comte de Rocheville, the honored and much-feasted guest, robbing my host of the means of escape from the police, who know me as André Dalmais, the notorious forger, swindler, and blackleg. Tell me, you are proud of your lover——"

He stopped suddenly, for without a word she fell to the ground and lay in the moonlight at his feet as still and pale as though she were dead. He sank down upon his knees at her side and gazed at her in dazed breathless awe.

Guilty outcast though he was, he loved the pure girl desperately, and, as he knelt at her side, the mad delusive hopes of security and freedom from the guilt and danger of the past, of a regenerate life with her as his wife, with whom he had deluded himself, rose mockingly before him.

What a sign, he picked up tenderly and reverently the flower which had fallen from her hair; then, with a last lingering yearning look, he rose, and, listening for a moment, passed stealthily through the open window and was gone.

Edith did not appear at breakfast the next morning; and, when her aunt hastened to her room, she found her feverish and exhausted. Greatly disquieted, Mrs. Thorne questioned her, and, sobbing hysterically, Edith related what had taken place.

The good lady, who had immeasurable faith in her favorite guest, listened in astonishment and incredulity.

But sure enough the Count had disappeared in the night, and the strong-box was plundered in the manner Edith described; and, when Rochester recounted his story, all doubt was at an end.

It was extremely humiliating and irritating to have been so shamefully deceived; but, like sensible people, the Thornes congratulated themselves on having got rid of such a dangerous guest so cheaply, and they judiciously hushed the matter up.

Edith soon recovered from the severe shock she had sustained, and regained her usual health and spirits.

Now that the excitement was over, she knew that what she had thought was love was nothing but infatuation, and she trembled to think what disaster it might have brought upon her.

Her warm steadfast love for Jack revived with increased fervor; and, when he wooed her with unaccustomed gentleness and humility, she gave him all he asked for.

The Little Princess.

BY A. E.

Of course she wasn't really a princess. In the great republic of America, where it is everybody's first and constitutional duty to be born free and equal, she had fulfilled her patriotic obligation by beginning life in the unpretentious cottage of the superintendent of the Eureka iron mines.

There was little enough, in truth, of the insignia of rank and wealth in the life into which she was born.

It was a hard, laborious, unbeautiful life, where time was marked by the heavy tramp of the day force going to work at sunrise and the night force going on at sundown; where the ceaseless throb of the engines was like the beat of one's own heart, and the smoke from the great cupola of the furnaces was palely luminous even at midday with the gases from the melting ore, and at night floated like a scarlet banner against the darkness.

Day in and day out the carts came slowly in, bringing the brown ore; month after month the heavy labor went ceaselessly on, for the furnace had been "blown in," and its stopping meant ruinous loss.

It was into this hard life the little princess was born, and somehow, although she was the smallest and tenderest of babies, it seemed to suit her.

Perhaps it was because she had known nothing else, her father thought grimly, when he remembered how her mother had pined in its dull monotony; perhaps it was because some blind instinct that guides young and ignorant creatures aright, told her she had come into her kingdom; but from the first she took kindly to the life, and grew up like a lily, in the hard and arid soil that surrounded her.

She was never quite like other babies. She never even had a name or was christened in the orthodox way.

Her old Irish nurse, who spoiled her and neglected her, swore one day between the puffs of her short, black pipe that the baby was the very image of princess "ol wanst saw ridin' in Psanyx Park in the owld counthry," and somehow, the absurd title seemed to fit the delicate little creature and cling to her, and so with the whole of the "mines" standing sponsors the little princess received her name.

Her poor young mother had died when she was born, and it would have been hard to say which was more forlorn and helpless in their bereavement—the little princess or her father, the superintendent of the mines.

He knew what it was to control hundreds of turbulent laborers, and deal with malefactors in a way that made it unlikely the offence would be repeated; but he felt himself impotently helpless before his baby, and accepted with humble gratitude the kind offices of the rough women who now and again saw after her in a motherly fashion.

Of course it was the very last place in the world in which one should have attempted to bring up a motherless child; but her tiny hands bound up as no others could the wounds death had made, and almost before he knew it she was too dear. He could not part with her.

From the first the little princess came into a world that capitulated before her.

The sharpest tongued woman in the long row of ill-built shanties had a rough word of kindness for her when they remembered she was motherless; there was never a driver of an ore cart too tired to toss her up on the back of his mules as the heavy wagon creaked slowly in, and when she threw away her best French doll to clutch at a piece of glittering slag in Red Mike's horny hand, the last fort had surrendered, and thereafter she reigned absolute.

"She air a knowin' one," he chuckled to himself that night, as he stirred the great fires beneath the furnace, and watched the iridescent flames play about the seething mass of white hot metal. "She air a knowin' one. Throwed away her baby for a piece of slag, 'cause it shined like gold an' jewels. Women'll mostly throw away anything—husbands or children, or any thing—for gold—or what looks like it." And the old man laughed bitterly, remembering his own youth and its experience.

That was the beginning, however, of a

strange friendship between the child and Red Mike.

There seemed a curious fascination for her in the taciturn, grim old man, who was universally feared and shunned by his fellow laborers; and while her old nurse dozed over her pipe or loitered to gossip with her cronies, the little princess was seen to slip away past the charcoal ovens, over the brook where the brown ore as it was washed stained the water like blood, up the sides of the gorge to where Red Mike kept faithful watch over his furnace fires.

No one knew much about Red Mike. He had come from a furnace in another State, but not so far off but what a horrible story had followed him.

He had married a young and handsome wife, it was whispered, who was not too fond of her rough and moody husband.

One day he found her and a man who paid a good deal of attention to her—it was his assistant at the furnace, mocking him and speaking slightingly of him in the camp.

He said nothing, but his hard face set itself like a mask of steel.

That night, as he and his assistant took off a heat of iron, just as the white-hot metal rolled in a sluggish tide in the trenches of the moulding floor, a terrible thing happened; the assistant tripped and fell into the molten mass.

There was one awful cry of agony on the midnight air, followed by the awful stillness of death.

No one could say Red Mike had anything to do with the tragedy. It might have been the merest accident. Such things happen only too often when life hangs on a hasty step backward or forward: a match that burns too slow or too fast, or a grain more or less of powder.

But that night Red Mike took up in his arms the burned and charred remains, mutilated beyond all human recognition, and bore them to his wife's door.

"See," he called to her, "I bring him back to you;" and with that he threw down what there was of his late assistant's body and turned and left.

When day broke, he was far on his way with his hard, grim face turned towards the iron fields of the South.

It may have been of the wife who blasted his youth, or of little children who might have been his, that Red Mike thought when he and the little princess spent so many hours together by the furnace doors.

They did not talk much, and the superintendent more than once found the little maiden, curled up like a dormouse, fast asleep in the old man's coat.

"Where's the child's nurse?" he asked angrily, one day. "Has she no one to take care of her?"

But Red Mike stopped him, putting out his work-roughened hand with a gesture that was pathetic in its wistfulness.

"Don't—don't say that," he begged brokenly; "don't take her away. I—I—There never was a child afore that loved me. Don't—don't do that.

They said at the mines that the superintendent was a hard man, but something in the old man's appeal touched his heart with sudden pity, and his eyes were dim as he turned away.

"Heaven!" he said, below his breath, "what would life be without her?"

For the most part, affairs went on smoothly enough at the Eureka mines, under the superintendent's strong hands; but by-and-by there came a change, a prescience of coming trouble.

There had been a heavy decline in pig iron. Pennsylvania furnaces were adopting a sliding scale of wages; winter was coming on; and discontent grew daily.

So far, the Eureka had kept on its regular force at regular wages, the stockholders on the superintendent's suggestion, agreeing to smaller dividends rather than let the loss fall on the laborers; but as ripples widen in a pool till they reach the circumference, so the agitation and discontent spread until even the Eureka mines were involved in the general trouble.

Delegates arrived by almost every train and addressed secret meetings; the air was full of denunciations: groups formed to speak of monopolies, "trusts," and combinations. A sullen discontent took the place of cheerful industry and thrift.

The superintendent watched the gathering storm with anxious eyes, and night after night, as he made his rounds, smoked many a bitter cigar, trying to find some means to avert the danger he saw imminent.

He had just signed a big contract with a steel mill to supply so many thousand tons of pig iron within a given time.

If the men struck even for a week; if the furnace fires went out even for an hour; if that molten mass cooled and hardened, it meant heavy loss to the company, ruinous loss to himself. His mind went back again over his own hard life.

He had raised himself up from the level of the lowest miner among them to what he was. There was not an agony of tired body or strained muscle that he had not known.

He knew what it was to work with bent back in the mines, to stand half dead with heat over the iron in the puddling room—there was not a detail of the work he had not actually done.

All the savings of years of scant wages and bitter self denial, all his ambition and hope were centred in the mine, and it was about to be swept from him by this strike.

What had they to complain of? Were not they fairly paid? Did not the loss fall on the owners? He ground his teeth together in impotent rage.

The evil day was not long in coming. The chief of the Brotherhood of Toilers ordered a strike of all the iron workers in the Eastern States.

Labor was vindicated and capital and monopoly crushed. The emancipated laborers threw down picks and shovels, furnace fires died out, and the great strike began.

When the superintendent appeared before his men on the morning, the news of the strike reached the Eureka mines, it was with a face with and set with determination.

He would make a fight for his own, and try once more to save his men from the consequences of their own folly.

He received impassively the formal declaration of the strike, and then he turned to the lowering faces before him.

He was a man of action—not of words. In all his life he had never made a speech; but when he stood before his men, his lips were touched with a rough eloquence as he appealed to their sense of justice not to visit on him punishment for wrongs he had never committed, and forewarned them of the poverty and want they must bring on their families if they abandoned their work.

There was visible hesitation, but they had not been instructed in vain by demagogues, and taught that master and man, labor and capital are antagonistic without believing it, and even as they hesitated, someone bolder than the rest cried, "Down with monopoly!" and in the cheering that followed the superintendent knew that his cause was defeated.

He straightened himself as one does after a heavy blow.

"Go, then," he cried,"; "but I mean that no one man that goes out on this strike shall ever have work here again. You shall abide by your choice."

In the silence that followed, Red Mike stepped forward.

"I will keep the furnace going," he said. "All the rest but that can wait. Telegraph for men to take the places of these."

A howl of anger burst from the men in the crowd, and was shrilly echoed by the women on the outskirts.

"Hound!" they cried: "sneak! Curse him!"

Just at that moment—and surely it was no place for her—the little princess came running towards them with her bright curls like a halo about her head, and her eyes shining like stars

"Mike!" she called, "Mike! Mike!" stretching out her baby hands to him just as a heavy rock, meant for him, came whizzing through the air and struck her. There was scarcely time for one long, quivering breath, and then the little princess lay quite still in the old man's arms—dead!

Her father sprang forward with a muttered oath, and then the two men stood shoulder to shoulder. It is the fierce animal impulse to fight for what we love. But the crowd fell back with something like a sob.

There was not one who would have harmed a hair of her bright head, and now she was dead—slain by their own hands!

As they moved slowly backward someone tumbled over the picks where they had thrown them. They stopped and picked them up, and, following one by one, went back to the mines; and the strike was ended. Not a word was said. Somehow it seemed the most fitting expression of their deep and passionate sorrow.

Even in her death the little princess ruled her kingdom.

LEMURS.

To lovers of pets, lemurs must always be of interest, as no other animals combine so many attractive qualities; the only drawback they possess is their excessive delicacy, which renders them extremely difficult to keep in a house—so difficult indeed are most of the species, and notably the most beautiful of all, the ring-tailed lemur, that even at the "Zoo," where they live in an even temperature and are carefully guarded from their greatest enemy, draught, they are by no means long-lived.

Were it not for the most unfortunate drawback, they would, no doubt, says a contemporary, be far more often kept than they are. They have all the amusing ways of the smaller monkeys, without their treachery and cunning; and, though they can bite shrewdly on occasion, they are, especially if they have been captured young, usually gentle in their manners and capable of great affection.

Their activity is most extraordinary, and they delight in taking long flying leaps, pitching with the utmost lightness, and never by any chance missing their hold.

In this way they will, for example, leap on to the top of an open door and from that on to a distant chair.

When in good health, they are extremely playful.

The form affections for and are fond of playing with not only human beings, but also other animals; for example, one which a gentleman had in his possession for some time was on most affectionate terms with a wire haired fox-terrior and a cat, both of which animals reciprocated its affection, and were never more happy than when playing with it, or lying together curled up with it in a basket before the fire, where it would, with the greatest care, wash the dog's coat, at the same time combing out any knots in the hair with its teeth—a performance which seemed to afford the greatest possible gratification to both animals.

This habit of licking and cleaning is one of the lemurs' peculiarities, as not only do they keep themselves scrupulously clean and attend to the coats of other animals with which they may be friendly, but they also show the greatest interest in the cleanliness of their human companions—as, for example, if a finger stained with ink be presented to them, they will lick it and scrape it with their teeth in a most persistent manner till the stain is removed.

They are most chilly animals, and nothing delights them more than a good fire, before which they will sit by the hour together, with their hands spread out to the blaze, enjoying the warmth, in which position, notwithstanding their fox-like faces, they are quaintly human in appearance.

Lemurs should be fed principally on fruit, vegetables, and sopped bread; but they have most omnivorous tastes.

Choosing Odd Texts.—From time to time clergymen have selected odd texts on which to pin a discourse.

When Dublin Cathedral was reopened after restoration at the expense of a Mr. Wise, the archbishop, wishing to improve the occasion, took for his text the words, "Go thou and do like Wise."

In the days when the chignon was much worn, Rowland Hill desiring to be heard against that particular fashion in feminine headgear, chose for the text of a sermon the words, "Top not, come down."

Some of his congregation were puzzled to know in what portion of the Bible the preacher had found his text, and, calling upon him the next day for enlightenment, he referred them to St. Matthew xxiv., 17—"Let him which is on the house-top not come down."

The writer of these lines once heard a very good discourse preached in a field in the country from the words, "And there was much grass in the place."

Some texts appear odd in certain circumstances. A well-known member of a country congregation had enlivened dull December by bringing home his bride; and the ladies were on the tiptoe of expectation the following Sunday to see what she was like. An involuntary smile was caused by the announcement of the text, "Behold the bridegroom cometh!"

Sermons have frequently been preached without any text at all; but the most curious discourse of the kind was that delivered by the grand father of Mendelssohn, the great composer.

He had applied for the vacant post of Court Chaplain, and the Emperor informed him that his success would depend upon the extemporary discourse which he should preach from a text selected by his Majesty, and given to him in the pulpit. Doctor Mendelssohn found, at the critical moment, that the envelope handed to him contained only a blank sheet of paper. Without losing his presence of mind he saw his line, and preached an excellent sermon on the creation of the world from nothing.

Giving and Keeping.—To a Frenchman studying English, as to an Englishman studying French, nothing is so hard to acquire perfectly as the idiom—the very part of the language which comes most natural to a native.

The difficulties of our own tongue in this respect are illustrated by the following dialogue between a foreigner and his English teacher—

"When you give a thing," asked the foreigner, "you cannot keep it, too, can you?"

"Certainly not."

"But when an honest man gives you his word he always keeps it, doesn't he?"

"Certainly."

"But when he gives his word how does he keep it? Does he take it back?"

"When an honest man gives his word he never takes it back."

"But if he keeps it he does not give it?"

"Why, certainly he does. Because, if he does not keep his word, he is no longer an honest man."

"Oh, I begin to see! Having given his word, and never taken it back, he keeps it all the while?"

"Certainly."

"What a beautiful language is the English!"

Miss Gushy (as Snagby prepares to rise)—"Oh, don't get up! Don't get up! Please keep your seat!"

Snagby (slightly bewildered)—"Like to oblige you, madam, but I get off at this street."

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Among the many and varied names that are borne by members of the royal family it is noticeable that neither John nor Jane, both so frequent in all classes of society, ever occur. The explanation seems to be that, in association with royalty, both names have been attended with persistent ill luck, all of their possessors being dogged by misfortune, and many of them dying a violent death.

Tantallon Castle, the ancient home of the Douglasses, and celebrated in song by Sir Walter Scott, has long been a ruin. For some time past the present proprietor, Sir Walter Hamilton Dalrymple, Bart., of Leuchie, has been engaged in operations with a view of making the old keep more accessible and disclosing several of its more characteristic features. He has reopened stairways leading to the battlements which James V. had built up; he has caused the old dungeon to be cleared out, and he has restored the shaft of the old garrison drawwell, which is sunk through the solid rock on which the castle stands, to a depth of 106 feet.

A correspondent has furnished the details of an extraordinary case of polygamy. A Brahmin of Bengal gave away his six aunts, eight sisters and four daughters in a batch in marriage to a boy 10 years old. The ages of the brides of three generations varied from 50 years to 3 months, and the baby bride was taken to the marriage ceremony on a brass plate. Among the Kulin Brahmins, it is said, the man who receives in marriage the majority of the daughters of a family is also bound to have the rest, otherwise the minority must suffer a life-long celibacy. The correspondent concludes: "Hundreds of instances like the above might be given if needed."

Surely the experiences, as a *fiancee*, of a young girl in the Bukowina province, in Austria, are unprecedented. She was exceptionally pretty, and had lovers by the score, her offers of marriage amounting to over one hundred when yet only nineteen years of age. A year later she was betrothed, but her intended died suddenly from the effects of an accident. Second, third, and fourth engagements were broken off by the departure of the young men to join the army for long periods of service. The fifth and sixth *fiances* were drowned. The next two swains who presented themselves, repenting at leisure of their precipitancy, raised objections to the lady's prospective dowry and were summarily dismissed. Number nine got tipsy on the betrothal day and tried to beat the lady fair. His successor appeared a regular Prince Charming, but, on the eve of the marriage, news of a wife and several children living in Bessarabia put the scoundrel to flight. An eleventh suitor proceeded cheerfully with his courtship till the wedding day was fixed, and then suddenly decamped. This proved too much for the poor girl, whose powers of endurance had been already taxed so severely; and she forthwith poisoned herself.

Music seems to flourish among the royalties. Queen Victoria and the Princess Louise are very accomplished musicians, and play the piano and organ better than the average "professional." The late Prince Consort was a composer of merit. The Princess of Wales is a pianist; the Prince himself, although he has excellent musical taste as a general rule, contents himself with playing the banjo. The Duke of Edinburgh, as every one knows, is a violinist. The Duke of Connaught, as every one does not know, is a very clever flutist. The Czar plays the cornet a piston. The Queen of Italy is one of the best pianists in her husband's dominions. The Empress of Austria is a mistress of the zither. The Queen of Roumania, "Carmen Sylva," plays the harp and the piano equally well. The Empress of Japan is an expert on the Japanese national instrument, the koto, a kind of large zither. King George of Greece has a musical specialty. His instruments are the castanettes and tumblers of water; and with these, using the castanettes in one hand, and stroking the rims of the tumblers with the other, he manages to produce really charming and novel effects. His daughter-in-law, the Crown Princess Sophie, plays the Hungarian "cymbalum." Finally, Prince Henry of Prussia, besides being a composer, play the piano and violin.

First Kentuckian—"Now did Colonel Strutter get his military title do you know?" Second Kentuckian—"Yes: when he was a young man he used to drill holes in a quarry."

Our Young Folks.

WHICH WAS THE THIEF?

BY MAGGIE BROWN.

"CALL him Billikins," said small Margaret, and Billikins he was called.

He was Jack's dog. Jack picked him up in the street—dirty, shivering, and starving, stoned by the boys, kicked by the men, nobody's dog—and Jack brought him home, and asked mother to keep him, though he knew how much she disliked dogs.

But Jack begged so hard, and promised so much, that mother was obliged to give in at last, and Billikins stayed.

For a short time all went well: Billikins behaved beautifully, and there was not a complaint against him.

Everyone began to like him—that is, everyone but Dolly's cat Fluff, and she looked upon him as an enemy, to be feared, dreaded, and scratched, if possible.

All went well until one day there was a whisper that something had been stolen from the kitchen. The next day it was more than a whisper, and on the third day cook came to mother with the news that a whole fish had disappeared from the pantry.

"It must be stopped, Jack," said mother, when she told the children about it; "and if it is not, I am very much afraid Billikins will have to go."

"But why Billikins!" asked Jack very indignantly. "Cook didn't say that he was the thief. I expect it was Fluff."

"It's funny she didn't steal before Billikins came," said Dolly quietly.

Jack knew that was true, but he was not to be beaten.

"If I prove that Fluff is the thief, mother," he said, after a minute or two, "you won't send Billikins away, will you?"

"Of course not," said mother; "but——" Then as she saw the look on Jack's face, she did not finish her sentence.

Next morning, soon after breakfast, Jack marched into the nursery, looking very important.

"Tom, Dolly, and Margaret, listen!" he said very solemnly. "I want to find out the thief, so I have shut Fluff and Billikins into the breakfast-room. There is a small piece of meat upon the table; so let us go very quietly and see if Fluff is stealing it. I am sure we shan't find Billikins touching it."

"All right," said Tom. But Dolly looked serious. She did not want to find Fluff stealing at all. She was fond of Billikins, and did not wish him to be sent away, but she was more fond of her dear cat.

"Come along," said Jack, "only come quickly. We must get into the room before they see us, or we shall disturb them."

On tiptoe down the passage crept the four children. They reached the breakfast-room door, and Jack slowly and carefully turned the handle.

There was a sound of hissing and growling, then a cry from Jack and a loud laugh from Tom, as the door was pushed open.

There, on the table, was Fluff, her back up, her hair standing out, and just beside her a plate of meat, and in front of her, half on a chair, and half on the table, with one paw in the plate, was Billikins.

Billikins gave a growl, and Fluff a hiss and a jump; then there was a crash as Fluff tipped over a jug of water, and mother, came running to see what was the matter. Billikins and Fluff, frightened by the noise ran out of the room.

"Well, who was the thief?" said mother, laughing, when she heard the story from Tom.

"I think it was Fluff, all the same," said Jack, "and I'll prove it yet. I'm sure Fluff is the thief."

"Then why didn't she steal before Billikins came?" asked Dolly slowly.

But she did not speak nearly so decidedly as she had done before.

She was beginning to be very much afraid that Fluff was the thief after all.

She had happened to be first in the room, and she thought she had seen Fluff on the table, and Billikins only just jumping on to it.

She made up her mind to find out all about it, for she was sure that if Fluff had become a thief there was somejreason for it.

So when Jack asked his mother to give him three days more before she decided to send Billikins away, Dolly determined to set to work to quietly watch both cat and dog.

Two days passed, food was stolen just as before, but nothing was said about it; and on the morning of the third day Jack came in to breakfast looking very pleased.

He carried a mysterious brown paper parcel, which he held up for Dolly to see, and nodded and smiled. It was quite evident to everyone that he had found out something, and was feeling very triumphant.

Dolly did not say anything, but went on eating her breakfast calmly. She looked rather curiously at Jack's parcel, but she did not seem very greatly disturbed by it. Breakfast was scarcely over when Jack slipped down from his seat, and ran to whisper something to his mother.

She nodded, and looked across at Dolly.

"Children," began mother, "Jack says that he has found——"

"Wait a minute," cried Tom. "We will have a regular trial. Do, mother, do."

"Yes, do," cried Jack and Margaret together.

Mother looked at Dolly doubtfully, but, to her surprise, Dolly smiled, and said, "All right."

So the big arm-chair was pulled out, and mother was seated in it in state, with a white anti-macassar over her head to make her look grand.

Jack sat on one side of the room, holding Billikins in his arms, and on the other sat Dolly, with Fluff in her lap.

Tom, dressed up in a red shawl and high top hat, marched up and down the room, calling, "Silence! Silence!"

Then when everyone was quiet Jack began:

"You all know about the food being stolen. Well, I have found the thief, and it's Fluff!"

Dolly put her arms around Fluff, and held her tightly.

"Prove it," said Tom.

Then Jack brought out the mysterious paper parcel, and slowly unfastened it. Inside was a small piece of ham.

"This," he said, "was taken away from Fluff as she was running out of the pantry."

"Did anyone else see her with it in her mouth?" asked Tom.

"Yes, someone else did," said Jack quickly. "Speak up: Margaret; tell the Judge what you saw." To everyone's astonishment, Margaret began to cry.

"I don't want to tell," she said. "I don' want Fluff to be sent away, though I saw her steal."

The judge got up from her seat, lifted Margaret on to her lap, and began to comfort her.

"Then it has been proved," said Tom very solemnly, "that Fluff is a thief. Now, Mrs. Judge, please say what is to be done to her."

"Has Dolly anything to say?" asked Mrs. Judge kindly, for she saw that Dolly was fidgeting about in her chair, and getting very red in the face.

"Yes, I have," said Dolly, jumping up from her seat, and putting Fluff into it; "yes, I have. I am very much afraid that Fluff is a thief."

"Hurrah!" shouted Jack; "then she must be sent away, and we shall keep Billikins."

"Wait a minute," said Tom. "Dolly has not finished yet."

"No," said Dolly eagerly, "I have not. I have found out why Fluff steals now, though she never did before Billikins came, and it is Billikins' fault."

"What!" cried Jack, very much astonished.

"Prove it," said Tom excitedly, for he knew Dolly's secret.

"I've watched Billikins and Fluff having their breakfast every morning for three days," said Dolly, "and I've found out that greedy Billikins eats up his own and Fluff's too."

Jack jumped from his chair, but Tom made him sit down again, and Dolly went on speaking.

"Cook always puts the breakfast outside, and she does not stop to see what happens," said Dolly; "but I watched from the window, and I've seen Billikins eat up every bit of the breakfast, and bark at Fluff if she goes near it. Of course Fluff steals if she's starving. I think if you send Fluff away you ought to send Billikins too."

Dolly sat down quickly after her long speech, breathless, quite forgetting that Fluff was in her chair.

There was a squeak and a miaow. Fluff was rescued, and everyone laughed.

"Now, Mrs. Judge, cried Tom, "it's your turn. Who is the thief? What is to be done?"

"Well," said mother, smiling at the excited little faces round her, "it seems to me that it is a case of six of one and half a dozen of the other."

The children started, and then Tom said slowly, "I see what you mean: you think that Fluff and Billikins are both in the wrong."

"That's just it," said mother. "Fluff ought not to steal from the pantry, and Billikins ought not to steal from Fluff. We won't send either the dog or cat away, but but we'll give Fluff her breakfast indoors, and Billikins his out of doors, and then we shall see if Fluff only stole because she was hungry."

This time all the children shouted "Hurrah!" The plan was tried, and it answered famously. Fluff gave up stealing, and Billikins stopped fighting her.

"So you see, father," said Dolly, when she was telling him all about it, "mother was right; it was a case of six of Fluff and half-a-dozen of Billikins—I mean six of one and half-a-dozen of the other."

ALICK'S SLATE.

"OH dear," cried Alick, "I never can do it!"

"What is the matter?" asked Emma; "why cannot you do it?"

"It is too hard for me," said Alick, throwing the slate on the floor, and jumping up from his chair, "and I won't be troubled with it any longer."

Emma stooped down.

"Oh, Alick, you have cracked your new slate!"

"I don't care; I wish it was all broken, and then I should not have these tiresome sums to do."

As Emma picked up the slate the cracked pieces came tumbling out of the frame.

"Well," she said, "you have got your wish; for your slate cannot be used again."

When Alick saw that his slate was really broken he looked grave enough. What would his mother say?

At that moment his mother called to him.

"Alick, have you done your sums? Make haste, for Aunt Susan has brought the prettiest little kitten for you; come down and see it!"

Alick looked at Emma and then at the slate.

"Oh, Alick, is it not a pity?"

Alick covered his face with his hands.

"I was very naughty," he said.

Again his mother called, "Alick, Alick, Aunt Susan is going. Come down and thank her for the kitten."

Then Emma went down.

"Where is Alick?" said her mother.

Then Emma told her mother about the sums and the broken slate, and her mother looked very sad.

"I am sorry that Alick has been so naughty, she said; "I am afraid Aunt Susan must take the kitten away and give it to some good little boy."

And she lifted up the kitten that was lying curled up on the sofa, and put it back into the basket.

"Oh, what a pretty little creature," said Emma; "how sorry Alick will be!"

And she stroked the soft kitten.

The tears came into Emma's eyes when she saw the little kitten carried away, but she knew that Alick did not deserve to have it.

As for Alick, he sat quite still, looking at the broken slate and then at the half rubbed-out figures on one of the pieces.

"I could have done it if I had tried," he said, "only I got into a bad temper; and I might have had a pretty kitten of my own and have been so happy."

And Alick waited for his mother to come up-stairs to him.

She came at last.

"Oh, mother," said Alick, "I am a very bad boy. I have broken my slate and have not done my sums!"

And Alick began to cry.

"I am sorry you have been so naughty, Alick," said his mother; "naughty boys are not happy; and Alick must show that he is a good boy before he can have a kitten."

NO FOOD FOR A WEEK.—Three little children were sent one day to gather broom. They live near Melbourne, in Australia. The eldest was a boy of nine, then came Jane, who was seven years old, and Frank, who was only five.

They had often been sent out for broom before, and had always come home safely; but on that particular Friday afternoon in 1864 they did not return. When night came, and their little beds were left empty, their parents became terribly anxious. There were no wild beasts to hurt the wanderers, but there were no berries or fruit to be found, so that the carpenter and his wife were afraid that the children might starve if they had lost their way in the woods.

All that night the father and several of his neighbors hunted for the little ones, shouting the Australian call of "Cooee" till their throats ached; and not that night only but day after day, and night after night for a week, they sought in vain.

In despair, the carpenter asked some of the natives if they would help him. He knew how clever they were in finding out the faintest trail.

They had not walked far before one of the natives stopped and pointed to the trampled grass. "Here little one tired," he said; "sit down. Big one kneel and carry him along."

A little farther on he stopped again. "Here travel all night, dark—not see that bush; her fall on him."

It was, as we said, on a Friday afternoon that the children were lost; on the Saturday week the black man led the father to a clump of broom. There lay the three poor little figures, the smallest in the middle, with his sister's frock on over his own clothes.

The carpenter went up at once, never expecting to find them alive. To his joy and surprise the elder boy roused himself. "Father!" he said, and then fell back exhausted. Little Frank awoke as if he had been sleeping quietly.

"Why did you not come, father? We were cooeeing for you."

Poor Jane, who had carried Frank when he was tired, and put her own frock on him because he was crying with cold, was scarcely alive, and could only murmur "Cold, cold!" when she was lifted up.

Happily they all recovered, although they had had nothing to eat all that time, and only a little water to drink now and then.

When the story was known a subscription was made for the brave little sister who took such care of her younger brother.

WHERE WOMEN ARE UNKNOWN.—It is commonly thought that men by themselves must grow rude and savage, that it is to women we owe all the graces and refinements of social intercourse. Nothing can be further from the truth.

In all the world (says a recent writer) there is probably not so polite and orderly a society as that of Athos, European Turkey.

As regards hospitality and gracious manners, the monks of Athos and their servants put to shame their most polished Western people.

There women are unknown, and disorder, tumult, confusion, seem impossible in this land of peace. If they have differences and squabbles about the right of property, these things are referred to law courts and determined by argument of advocates, not by disputing and high words among the claimants.

While life and property are still unsafe on the mainland and on the sister peninsulas of Cassandra and Longos, Athos has been for centuries as secure as any country in Europe.

So far, then, all the evidence is in favor of the restriction. Many of the monks, being carried to the peninsula in early youth, have completely forgotten what a woman is like, except for the brown, smoky religious pictures in which the form and features of women are studiously made unlovely and far from human.

What strikes the traveler is not the rudeness, the untidiness, the discomfort of a purely male society; it is rather its dulness and depression.

Some of the older monks were indeed jolly enough, and drank their wine and cracked their jokes freely; but the novices who attended at the table, the men and boys who had come from the mainland to work as servants, muleteers, or laborers, seemed all suffering under a permanent depression and sadness.

The town of Karyes is a most sombre and gloomy place. There are no laughing groups, no singing, no games among the boys.

Everyone looks serious, solemn, listless, vacant, as the case may be, but devoid of keenness and interest in life.

RIDICULE.—We may satirize error, but we must compassionate the erring, and this we must always teach by example to children, not only in what we say of others before them, but in our treatment of themselves. We should never use ridicule towards them except when it is evidently so good-natured that its spirit cannot be mistaken. The agony which a sensative child feels on being held up before others as an object of ridicule, even for a trifling error, a mistake of peculiarity, is not soon forgotten or easily forgiven. When we wish therefore to excite contrition for a serious fault, ridicule should never be employed, as the feelings raised are opposed to self-reproach.

PRIDE of heart forerunn destruction.

A PEACEFUL HOUR.

BY S. J.

An hour of peace—oh, who can tell its worth
To one long wearied with the cares of earth—
An hour wherein no burdens need be borne,
Nor any "costly mask of face-joy" worn?
All fancied wrongs and idle cravings cease,
Hushed to deep calm by this one hour of peace.

For, when we can escape the world's control,
The light of Truth shines clearly on the soul—
A purer life, a higher grade of thought
Seems possible to us, no longer caught
By fleeting visions; and once more we feel
New strength and gladness o'er our spirits steal.

Give us thy peace, O pleasant summer day!
Give us thy warmth and brightness! we might pray;
We are so weary of the bonds we hide,
Tasks self-imposed and simple joys denied,
Yet from the strain of Life is no release—
Only at times we find an hour of peace.

SELF-DESTRUCTION.

The recent suicide of a youth of 18 in a village near Manchester, England, because his father would not consent to his marrying a widow of 38, already possessed of a family of eight children, of whom the eldest was older than the youth himself, is only one of a large number of remarkable instances of self destruction placed on record from time to time.

The most trivial causes have been sufficient to lead weak minded people to put an end to their own existence.

It is not long ago since a boy of 14, at Aules, in France, blew out his brains as a practical protest against the injustice which he considered had been done to him by his father in taking charge of three small children, the orphans of his eldest son.

Quite recently, too, a wealthy Russian lady felt that life was no longer worth living because her dressmaker had spoiled some costly material specially ordered for her from Paris.

Curiosity as to whether or not there really is another life after the present, and what it is like, led a couple of youngsters to resolve upon solving the mystery without further delay by cutting short their earthly career with a pistol.

They might almost be classed in the same category as two other lads in Moscow, who left behind them a written intimation that they had destroyed themselves "because they wanted to rid the world of a couple of fools."

But there was, on the other hand, something really pathetic in the tragic fate of a certain child of genius, Regnault by name, who some years ago terminated his career in a wretched garret in the Place Luvois in Paris.

He had a favorite dog named Cherie, to which he was devotedly attached, and he frequently declared that he would never survive his canine companion, whom he regarded as his only friend.

He was an engraver by profession, but, what with misfortune and pride, he earned only a miserable pittance. Although, however, he himself was so lean that it was said of him "he might have played the apothecary in Romeo and Juliet without any making up," he kept his dog in good condition. At last, one intensely cold day, the dog suddenly died, and in his miserable lodging Regnault was found lying on the floor lifeless, with his arms clasped in a last fond embrace around the stiffened corpse of his "only friend."

Held by thumb and forefinger was a phial containing arsenic. On the table there lay two papers; one repeated what he had often said before, that he would not survive his dog; the other said the first dose of poison he took was inadequate, but he was about to swallow another "which could not fail." It did not.

Against this instance of a long premeditated suicide may be set one, equally as curious, which seemed to be the result of a sudden impulse. It is related by Sir Charles Bell, formerly surgeon of the Middlesex Hospital.

He went one day to a barber's shop to be shaved, and happened to say to the barber that a man had just been brought into the hospital with his throat cut; adding that if the would-be suicide had only understood the anatomy of the neck, and the situation of the great artery, he could easily have made a corpse of himself instead of only a patient.

The barber showed great interest in the story, and, at his request, Sir Charles explained to him the formation of the throat, and pointed out the exact spot where the great artery is to be found. Almost immediately afterwards the barber went out of the room without stopping to finish the shaving.

Sir Charles waited for a time, expecting him to return every moment, but waited in vain. He then went after him, and found him lying on the ground behind the house with his throat cut at the precise spot which the surgeon had described to him as the most vital part of the neck. It is, of course, quite possible that the man was suffering from incipient insanity, which the conversation had simply brought to a crisis.

Although, however, coroners' juries generally show a leniency in cases of self destruction, and declare that the individual has been the victim of temporary insanity, there are numerous instances which suggest that people do occasionally destroy themselves when they are perfectly sane, and either deliberately decide that death is preferable to a continuance of the conditions in which they live or, on the other hand, want to "revenge" themselves on other persons by, in familiar parlance, "cutting off their nose to spite their face."

Of the former, many instances have occurred, more especially among Russian exiles who have wished to free themselves from the horrors of prison life in Siberia, and have left documents behind showing a perfect possession of all their senses at the time.

Among suicides from motives of revenge, one of the strangest was that of an officer at Kharkoff, who hanged himself because he had not been invited by his cousin to a christening. "I want the ill-bred scoundrel to feel," he wrote in a letter, "how deeply he has insulted me."

Suicide by children is more frequent than probably the majority of persons would suppose. Mere infants of five or even three years old have been known to bring their brief existence to a sudden conclusion.

The conditions of life in Paris seem to be more especially favorable to this propensity, while throughout France, during the eight years 1866-68, 1870-72, and 1874-75, there were registered 240 suicides by children.

Going to the other extreme, we read a short time ago of a man of 92 hanging himself because the doctors had told him that an affection of his heart, though not painful was incurable.

That the impulse to commit suicide is both hereditary and may assume an absolutely epidemic form is proved by an abundance of instances, of which we can here give only two or three.

Gall, the phrenologist, speaks of a family of which the grandmother, the sister, and the mother, and also the son and daughter of the last mentioned, all killed themselves.

But even more remarkable, perhaps, than anything yet mentioned is the fact that numerous cases of suicide are on record as having happened among animals! There was a lady's lapdog which took so much to heart a scolding by its mistress that it went and drowned itself in a pool of water, unable to survive the blow to its feelings.

Grains of Gold.

Great things almost always have to grow with struggles.

The true vagrant is the only king above all comparison.

Mischief comes by the pound and goes away by the ounce.

Time is an herb which cures all diseases of the imagination.

Procrastination is hardly more evil than grasping impatience.

True politeness requires humility, good sense and benevolence.

Great works are performed, not by strength, but by perseverance.

The higher the rank the less the pretense, because there is less to pretend to.

A fool is always meditating how he shall begin his life; a wise man how he shall end it.

Next to knowing when to seize an opportunity, the most important thing in life is to know when to forego an advantage.

It is such a piece of good luck to be natural. It is the good gift which the fairy godmother brings to her prime favorites in the cradle.

I wish that it were never one's duty to quarrel with anybody. I do so hate it; but not to do it sometimes is to smile in the devil's face.

When we are young we are lavishly employed in procuring something whereby we may live comfortably when we grow old; and when we are old we perceive it is too late to live as we proposed.

Femininities.

Good and bad people are each less so than they seem.

Many have lived on a pedestal who will never have a statue when dead.

We fancy that we suffer from ingratitude, while in reality we suffer from self-love.

Selfishness is the meanest and most contemptible of all vices—other people's selfishness, that is.

A single birthday party at Reading did service for three relatives who were born on the same day.

Jepson: "Why is it that men marry widows?" Jobson: "They don't. It is the widows that marry them."

Husband: "You wept in your sleep, wife. What was the matter?" Wife: "I dreamed I was peeling onions."

Father: "Clara, I see that the front gate is down this morning." Clara, shyly: "Yes, papa; you know love levels all things."

The Romans are said to have first used feathers in bed. Feather-beds were in use in England during the reign of Henry VIII.

Boston has an eleven year old heroine—Lizzie Murphy, who last week jumped overboard and saved a child of three from drowning.

Butcher: "I do not like to lose your custom. What can I do to make matters all right with you?" Customer: "Buy me a new set of teeth."

A learned writer declares that butter was unknown to the ancients. This makes it harder than ever to account for the flavor of some we have tasted.

Mr. Bertie: "Do you like the engagement ring, dearest?" Miss Gertie: "Yes, it is splendid, and so different from what the others have given me!"

One of the Berlin hotels was lately robbed by two persons in the garb of nuns. They were subsequently apprehended, when one of the "women" turned out to be a man.

It is said of a well-to-do woman who died lately in Newark, N. J., that she was so miserly that she would split large lucifer matches, making one match do for use two or three times.

An office has been opened in Paris where the impecunious nobility may consult a list of eligible American maids, widows and divorcees with information in regard to the amount of their fortunes.

She: "And do you really, truly love me, George?" He: "Of course. Why do you ask, dear?" She: "Why, you have seemed so indifferent of late. We haven't had a quarrel for over two weeks!"

Wife, affectionately: "There, George, dear, is your dessert, and you must promise to eat every bit of it. It's a pie, and I made it myself." Husband, cheerfully: "All right, Mollie; bring in the axe."

Modesty impresses upon us its vestiges, and leaves with us its sighs. We lose its mechanism, but we preserve its virtue. There still lingers with us a shadow of its envelope,—I mean the blush that suffuses and clothes us.

"Where did you get that cake, Annie?" "Mother gave it to me." "She's always a-giving you more'n she does me." "Never mind, Harry; she's going to put mustard plasters on us to-night, and I'll ask her to let you have the biggest."

Artistic friend: "And so you are to be married?" Miss Marie Hilkins, struggling artist: "Yes; it is simply impossible to sell a picture with such a name as Hilkins on it, and so I have accepted the heart and hand of a clerk named De La Croix."

The best thing to give your enemy is forgiveness; to an opponent, tolerance; to a friend, your heart; to your child, your example; to a father, deference; to your mother, conduct which will make her proud of you; to yourself, respect; to all men, charity.

"And so you think you will get married when you grow up to be a young lady, Flossie?" said the caller. "Oh, I haven't a doubt of it!" asserted Flossie. "Everybody says I am very much like my mamma, and she, you know, has been married three times."

Mrs. Gossip: "Anything new to-day?" Mrs. Knowall: "Yes; they say Mr. Hilkins killed his wife." "Shouldn't wonder. I'll just bet he did, too." "And they say Mr. Finks has given a large sum of money to an orphan asylum." "Hum—I don't believe it."

Nineteen years ago a Gratiot county farmer refused to let his daughter go to a candy pull. She went though and remained away. Last week she drove up to her father's door, lifted out her 11 children, coolly took off her wraps, and astonished her father by declaring that she had concluded to return and stay home, and hereafter be an obedient daughter.

An English woman resident in Syria reports the discovery, near Beyrout, of a bedstead made of gold and silver and inlaid with precious stones. An inscription upon it in English characters states that it belonged to Eleanor, Queen of England. The bedstead was discovered in a cave, and is supposed to have been placed there for security when Edward I. left the East.

A novel race is soon to come off in West Chester, Pa. Each contestant is to wear laced shoes, and all the shoes are to be taken off and placed in a barrel. The runners then start from a mark, run 25 yards to the barrel, pick out their own shoes, put them on, lace them up and then run 100 yards to a mark. The man who gets over the entire route first, with shoes properly laced, will be the winner.

On the Great Western Line in England it has for years been the custom to set aside "ladies' compartments" of each class on the principal trains; but these are usually empty, and the women for whom they are intended persist in filling the smoking cars. During a given period 1000 seats were kept exclusively for ladies in certain through trains, but the maximum number of those seats which were occupied at any time was about 250.

Masculinities.

Sickness is Nature's way of saying: "I told you so."

The man who falls in love will find plenty of occupation.

Conscience—Mostly used by us in judging the actions of others.

He that may hinder mischief, and yet permits it, is an accessory.

"Few men stand prosperity well." When it comes they sit nearly all the time.

A woman who throws herself at a man's head will soon find herself at his feet.

Marriage is a lottery in which we all draw something usually a baby carriage.

You won't lose anything by allowing the hired girl to go out walking with the iceman.

The man who is trying to climb up finds lots of heels above him and lots of fists behind him.

A man who cannot keep his own knife ten minutes can generally keep a borrowed blade ten years.

A life that will bear the inspection of God and of men is the only certificate of true religion.

Men are born to be serviceable to one another; therefore either reform the world or bear with it.

How mortifying it is, after spending one's whole life in endeavoring to make one's self perfect in one's business to find out that everybody knows so much more about it than one's self!

Religion is like the fashion; one man wears his doublet slashed, another laced, another plain; but every man has a doublet. So every man has his religion. We differ about trimming.

"What's the matter?" said Ethel's father, as George reeled into his study. "Are you sunstruck?" "No," replied the young man, "I am daughter-struck. That's what I came to see you about."

"Ah, Harry, before we were married you used to say, 'Look in the tea, love, that will make it sweet.'" "Did I?" "Yes; and now you put a napkin over the top of the cream pitcher when you pass it to me."

"I had twice as many men as women in my congregation this morning," said the parson, "How did you manage it?" "I announced last week that my sermon this morning would be on the subject of 'The Duties of Woman.'"

William T. Doremus, of Flatbush, has invented a bed-quilt which is described as having "tubular parallel weighting pockets, in combination with substantially continuous flexible masses or fillings of weighting material, applied to the pockets, thereby better protecting the occupant.

There are certain minds which cannot be dealt with in a straightforward manner; temperaments averse to all resistance; native characters whom truth causes to reel, who always set their faces against the straight road to reason, and whom you cannot lead save by turning them with their backs to the goal.

Many people have expressed astonishment at the fact that the Prince of Wales speaks German with perfect fluency. The truth is that his command of English is the surprising thing. In the royal nursery German was spoken until Albert Edward was 12 years of age. The Prince is also in thorough command of French.

An English photographer claims to have obtained a photograph in which the natural colors were reproduced when the exposure was made, by accident, just at the moment when there came a blinding flash of lightning. He says that a friend of his once got a colored plate under similar circumstances, and believes that electricity has to do with photographing colors.

A passion for balloon ascensions was among the many peculiarities possessed by a young business man who died in Wilna, Conn., a few days ago. He made ascensions all over his State and undertook a voyage from St. Louis to New York, but after a journey of two miles he landed in the woods. If he succeeded in this trip, he had planned to make an air voyage across the Atlantic.

Sir Edwin Chadwick, who died recently, was once asked to what he attributed his long life and good health. "Well," he replied, "I have always taken great care of myself; I have my daily tub, in which I strongly believe. But my great age is undoubtedly hereditary, for my father died at the age of 84, my grandfather at 86, and my two great-grandfathers were centenarians."

A young woman in Parkersburg, W. Va., recently advertised for a husband and received numerous answers, to the writer of one of which—a St. Louis man—she became engaged. A time was set for the wedding, but before it arrived the groom met with an accident by which he lost a leg. But she was a woman of her word, and after his recovery they were married. She recently wrote home that her husband was engaged in steady employment and was a good man.

Do not commit the common blunder of thinking that there is some special virtue in "beginning at the foot of the ladder." On no subject is there more tiresome twaddle talked. The office boy in a bank stands the poorest chance of any one in the concern of becoming its President unless favored by very unusual ability and extraordinary mortality among his superiors. There may be plenty of room at the top, but there is a fellow with a club on every landing, and if you have to enter by the basement door there is simply another chance of your being knocked in the head.

Kaiser William's order to the Minister of the Royal House on the subject of the new court dress for civilians to wear at the royal receptions runs thus: "It is my desire that at my court the good manners and customs of former ages relating to the garments should be revived." White or black breeches according to the rank—and shoes with buckles are to be worn. Also, instead of the swallow-tail dress coat, a black cloth coat of antique shape, with black satin facings and collar, a long satin vest, cashmere breeches and silk stockings—all black—and a three-cornered hat without feathers, as well as a sword.

Recent Book Issues.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

The Cosmopolitan Magazine has now taken place among the finest publications of its class in the world. The articles are by the best authors, and on subjects of leading public interest. The numerous illustrations are all fine works of art. In all respects, indeed, *The Cosmopolitan* bears out its title, and is really acceptable to the whole world of readers. Published at New York.

THE August *Magazine of American History* is filled with a pleasing variety of able and popular papers. The opening illustrated paper is "Historic Houses and Revolutionary Letters." The second article, "Glimpses of Log-cabin Life in Early Ohio." Following this, are "The Blue and Beautiful Narragansett;" and "The True Story of An Appointment," and a very readable and significant story it is. Dr. Prosper Bender discusses "The French Canadian Peasantry." Among the shorter contributions are two beautiful poems, "Our Beloved Flag," and "The Edict of Nantes." The "Prospectus of the First American Edition of Shakespeare," a curious antique treasure, appears in minor topics, and "Sixty Waymarks in the World's Progress," furnish a list worthy of careful preservation. The several departments are richly diversified. 743 Broadway, New York City.

A HARD FIGHT WITH A VICIOUS HORSE.—A terrible conflict between a farmer named Harvey Smith and a vicious stallion occurred recently, at Castle Hill, Presque Isle, Me. Smith was working the stallion and another horse when the stallion became vicious and frantically attacked his mate with teeth and hoofs. Smith quickly unhooked the traces and succeeded in uncoupling the horses. Then the stallion attacked his master. Smith is a powerful man, and after a severe struggle, in which he was severely wounded in the hip by the animal's feet, he succeeded in subduing the horse and led him to the barn, where he hitched him. He removed the harness and was taking the horse to the stall, when the vicious animal suddenly attacked him again. The wind blew the barn door shut, and Smith found himself imprisoned on the barn floor with the frantic brute. For nearly half an hour he fought him with no weapon but his fists, leaping aside to avoid the assault as much as possible, but being often knocked down and fearfully bruised. He found his strength failing, and was just making up his mind that he must be killed, when the horse in some way disengaged a sled-stake from the side of the hay-mow, and Smith saw it rolling toward him on the floor. Seizing the stake he swung it with all his strength, and, striking the stallion just behind the ear, with one blow laid him dead at his feet. A reporter visited Smith and found him badly bruised all over the body, and in a sadly crippled condition.

LIFE.—Whatever may be the mystery, the value, or the purpose of life, it is to every human being the rounding off of a separate self.

This self is the highest outcome of life; it is a complex being, an inimitable creation, full of possible achievements, and perhaps infinite in its working power. And life immediately becomes worth living to the man who perceives the value and the capabilities of this self, and while accepting the gift, acknowledges that he is indebted to the Giver.

The value of the physical body which forms part of this self may be daily increased by the owner during the years of health and strength, and there is no part of it that does not deserve the best care and training that can be bestowed on it.

All its organs were originally most exquisitely adapted to perform their several functions, and it rests with man to use or abuse them, to devote himself to noble or to ignoble purposes.

DUTY.—To do our duty and make the best of life should be the aim of all of us. Selfishness is probably at the bottom of most of the ills of life. In the records of good men we invariably find they were animated during their lives by unselfishness of character, a high sense of duty, and a love for their fellow-men.

No less a philosopher than Kant, when speaking of duty once said, "Duty—wondrous thought that worketh neither by fond insinuation, flattery, nor by any threat, but merely by holding up thy naked law in the soul, and so extorting for thyself always reverence, if not always obedience, before whom all appetites are dumb, however secretly they rebel!"

GETTING MARRIED.

IN the tying of the nuptial knot, bride and bridegroom very often indulge in strange humors. Sometimes, however, the circumstances and surroundings of the bymeneal victims are such as to enforce unusual incidents, in spite of the best and most serious intentions.

Not long ago a couple in Indiana were married on horseback. On a certain evening, as the Rev. Seymour Guernsey was holding service in his little church at Henryville, Clark County, the congregation were startled by a cry from the door, "Hello, the church!"

A warden went to see what was the matter and quickly returned with the announcement that "a couple at the door wanted to get married in a powerful hurry."

Mr. Guernsey now went to the door and found there a lady and gentleman mounted on horses flecked with foam and blowing hard. They gave their names as Martin Mall and Sarah Pixley, exhibited a Washington County license, and asked to be married instanter.

After slight deliberation, Mr. Guernsey consented, as, with the congregation gathered round, the young couple joined hands without dismounting and were made man and wife.

The bridegroom then stated that the "old gentleman," the bride's father, was not far behind, and that they had had a race of thirty miles for it. Then they turned their horses' heads and rode away.

A curious case of re-marriage was reported from Milwaukee a year or two ago. Twenty years previously, a Mr. Charles R. Scoffin had married an accomplished young lady residing in Delavan—Miss Eliza B. Smith.

Two hours after the ceremony, and while the wedding festivities were at their height, the bridegroom received a message which called him away to Montana without delay. With a hasty kiss for his bride of two hours, young Scoffin departed, promising to return as soon as possible.

But a long period of weary waiting followed. Week succeeded week, and year went after year, but no news came of the absent husband. At length Mrs. Scoffin procured a divorce, though she did not remarry.

So twenty years passed away, and then one fine morning the old friends of Scoffin were startled by his reappearance on the scene, and he had not been in the city many hours before he learnt all about his bride of twenty years before, and sought her out.

Explanations were offered and accepted, and the next day bells were set ringing over the re-marriage of the old time lovers.

The following story is told by a clergyman, who was an actor in it.

He had married a woman as uncertain age to a young soldier from the adjacent garrison, and, after entering their names in the register, asked the man whether he wished for a marriage certificate, whereupon the bride thrust herself forward and said, "Yes; I shall require a certificate," evidently regarding it as a sort of conveyance to her of the man she had succeeded in obtaining.

Armed with the title-deed, she marched off with her property, and then the clerk threw additional light on her conduct.

"She meant to be married, sir," he said, "she did. Why, when she came to me to arrange for its being to-day, I told her there was no time unless she got a license, and that would be expensive.

"'I don't care,' she says, 'what it costs me; I will be married this time! Why,' she says, 'I've missed twice afore. The first time I had the banns put up and all, and then found the man had a wife already! Then I was outasked with another, and fixed the day, and came to church with my friends, and—he never came! So this time I won't be disappointed!'"

The clergyman added, "Perseverance certainly does wonders; but the curious part of the affair was that, the bride going next day into the barrack square, and being asked to pick her husband out of some dozen or so of soldiers of the same regiment, didn't know him!"

Until quite a recent date, marriages in the rural districts of Wales were attended by many curious circumstances.

When a wedding had been agreed upon, what were called "bidding papers" were sent round to the friends of the parties, which requested the favor of the invited person's "very good and most agreeable company;" and, it was added, "whatever donation you may be pleased to bestow on us then will be thankfully received, warmly acknowledged, and cheerfully repaid whenever called for on a similar occasion."

This paper was signed by the betrothed couple, and a double postscript was added on behalf of each, asking for the return of "all gifts of the above nature," together with additional favors.

On the day of the wedding it was the custom for the bride to be hidden away by her friends, and four or five representatives of the bridegroom would be chosen to discover her place of concealment and bring her forth, which was often a matter of considerable difficulty.

Subsequently, the friends of the bridegroom made an attack upon the escort of the bride, and between the combatants the poor girl often got roughly handled.

But eventually she would arrive at the church, and the ceremony would be hurriedly gone through; after which all the male friends would engage in a furious race back to the bride's home, the victor being rewarded with a pint of ale.

When the happy couple reached home they seated themselves at a table, each holding a plate for the reception of the "bidding money." Later on, practical jokes were largely indulged in the newly-married pair being the usual victims.

Marriage between persons of very unequal ages are common enough, but it is not often that the disparity is so great as in the case of a couple who were married the other day in a certain village near Dunstable.

The bridegroom was a laboring man, fifty years of age; the bride had reached her eighth-sixth year, and was an inmate of the Leighton Buzzard Workhouse.

Both had been previously married, the woman having experienced thirty-six years of a widow's life, and the man having been a widower for about a dozen years.

Usually, when the bride's years are greatly in excess of the bridegroom's, it is a case of marrying for money on the man's part; but no such motive could exist in this instance.

Numerous cases of men and women being married while one of the parties has been on the verge of death might be given. An interesting instance occurred a few years ago.

A reverend bachelor of seventy-three was lying on his deathbed with a severe attack of paralysis. For twenty years there had lived with him as housekeeper a steady, sensible woman, who had served him honestly, and tended him in his illness like a daughter.

He was wishful to provide for her in some way, now that his end was near, but his great liberality to the poor had left him almost without means.

After pondering the matter for a time, a ray of light at last dawned upon him, and he called his faithful housekeeper to him.

"Of course you are aware there is a Ministers' Widows' Fund, so that, if the husband dies, his wife will have an annuity during her life. Now, supposing you marry me, although I am almost at death's door, you will be amply provided for in the future. Will you consent to this?"

"Master, dear, you must be doting! What would people say?"

"I was never more serious in my life, Mary, and I am sure people will say we have both acted wisely in the matter. Take till the evening to think it over, and then bring me your answer."

In the evening Mary told him she would take him. So, ten days after, they were married, and three days later, the good old man died; but his widow lived many years to enjoy her share of the Widows' Fund.

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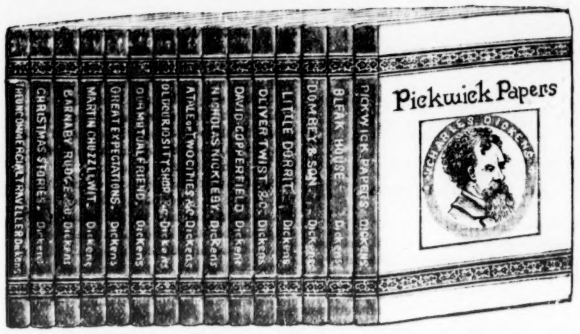

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The Saturday Evening Post,

726 Sansom St., Philadelphia, Pa.

Humorous.

LOVE AND THE SHADOW.

I sought to catch my shadow, but it ever onward flew;
I could not overtake it, though I'd ardently pursue.
I turned about and, bailed, thought to bow to its decree,
When lo! my shadow, smiling, came and followed after me.

I sought to win my lady's love. I wandered after her;
A cold and careless glance was all my lady would confer.
I turned me 'bout and let the thoughts I held of her go free,
When lo! with smiles and beckonings, she came and followed me.

—U. N. NONE.

"I understand you own a baby." "You are mistaken. I'm only its father."

Society people, architects, artists and dentists all maintain drawing rooms.

When is a serial story like money deposited in a bank?—When it grows in interest.

A Long Branch belle has a girdle made of silver dollars, and it looks like a waist of money.

Miss A.: "Has Charley a sister?"

Miss B.: "No; but he will have one soon—as soon as he proposes to me."

Old lady, to newsboy: "You don't chew tobacco, do you?"

Newsboy: "No, ma'am, but I kin give yer a cigarette."

Wife: "What do you suppose baby is thinking about?"

The brute of a husband: "I 'spose he's thinking what to cry about to-night."

"Oh, George, papa is unchaining the dog!"

"It's all right. He used to be my dog. I gave him to the dealer to sell to your papa."

"That is Tom's yacht off there on the horison, Harriet."

"Oh, how lovely! I'll ask him when he comes in what the horizon looks like when he is close to it."

"I wish I was an angel," said Willie.

"Why?"

"It must be dandy fun this weather to be nothin' but a head with a pair of feather fans behind your ears."

Sam Jones says, "Next to a pretty woman, I love a fast horse." We don't. When we are next to a pretty woman we want a slow horse—one of them kind that you have to build a fire under to start him.

Wag: "That's a strange pair of scales you have there! I suppose they are of the ambuscade kind."

Grocer: "Ambuscade? What is that?"

"Why, they lie in weight, as it were."

Wife: "You dance a great deal better than you did before we were married. Then you always tore my dress in dancing, but you don't now."

Husband: "Humph! Then I didn't have to pay for it."

Purchaser: "Rosenbaum, you told me this suit was fast colors. Look how it has run."

Rosenbaum: "S'hellup me, Vatter Abraham, vot does the man vant? I saidt does colors vas fast, unt dey run. Do you dink dey oughter fly, or go by steam, or somedings like dot?"

"How does commerce between nations affect them?" was asked of a little Irish girl in the geography class.

"It makes them cousins," she answered promptly. The geography said, "Commerce between nations brings them into close relations."

A country couple, newly married, went to Coney Island last week, and the groom called for some wine. When asked what kind, he replied: "We want that kind of wine where the corks busts out and the stuff begins to bile and keeps a-bilin' till yer git the worth of your money."

"Johnny," he whispered to her little brother, "did your sister get a note from me last night? It was written on pink paper."

"I think she must have got it," said Johnny, "'cause when she came down to breakfast this morning her hair was done up in pink curl-papers."

Advertiser: "I wish this advertisement placed in some part of the paper where people will be sure to see it."

Editor: "Yes, sir—yes, sir. I can put it right alongside of an editorial, if you wish."

Advertiser: "Hem! Please put it alongside of the base ball news.

Mabel: "The man who marries me must have a good big bank account."

Maud: "You don't mean to say you will marry solely for money?"

Mabel: "No, not exactly; but if any one swears he loves me I shall require a deposit merely as an evidence of good faith.

A man met an employe of his, an Irishman, on the street and stopped him with the question, had he heard the news. On Pat's replying, "No," he said:

"The devil is dead."

Pat reached down into his pocket and handed the man a quarter.

"What is that for?" he asked.

"Well," said Pat, "it's the custom in our country to support the orphans when the parents die."

"What! Moving out?" he exclaimed to a householder on Brush street who had a big van backed up to the door.

"Yes."

"But this isn't May 1."

"I know it."

"How do you happen to move now?"

"Because the landlord wants his rent. Times and season are nothing to me. I move in January or July. I am guided only by one principle. When the landlord of the house begins to get the jack-screws under it to move it off I vacate. I know then that he is tired of my society."

SCARED AT A WATCH.—For years a certain Dr. Allen, a Scottish physician, was suspected of being a wizard, an opinion which was considered all but confirmed when, in 1630, he provided himself with a silver watch of the regulation size and style.

Chancing to stop with a neighbor over night, and it being somewhat cold, he laid the watch near his body and covered it with the bed quilts so that the chilly weather should not affect the works. Next morning he arose rather abruptly and left the house without removing his treasure from its cosy nest in the bed.

In attending to the room the servant discovered the "infernal chattering thing," and immediately concluded that it must be the old doctor's "familiar spirit," conclusions which she hardly arrived at before she flew wildly from the room.

Other servants were called, and the whole array charged the "chattering thing" in the bed. Clubs and tongs were freely used, but the case was strong and the thing still c attered defiantly.

One of the girls, more courageous than the others, finally agreed that she would take the tongs and carry the thing to the moat and drown it, a proceeding fraught with danger, but at last decided upon.

The others followed at a respectable distance with hoes, clubs and shovels, with which they proposed to pounce on the thing should it attempt to attack the heroic girl.

When the old doctor returned for his watch, he was informed of what had been done, one of the servants leading the way to where the thing had been drowned. It was found hanging on a bush on the bank of the moat.

The failure to beat or drown the thing to death fully convinced the servants that it was in reality the old wizard's spirit, and they could not be persuaded to touch it.

The story is related to show what rarities watches must have been even at that late period of the seventeenth century.

HOSPITABLE GHEGS.—Hospitality among the Ghegs (in Turkey) is of the warmest kind. When a stranger is received into a house the entire party, supplemented by neighbors, gather around a big fire in the centre of the floor. A sheep is killed and roasted whole, this being a special mark of favor among the mountaineers.

Every one sits upon the floor and eats without knife or fork.

Home-made beer and various cakes help to make up a sumptuous bill-of-fare, and after eating until not another mouthful can be put away, one by one the gormandisers drop off to sleep.

During the feasting the women sit apart in the corner of the room, finding satisfaction for their hunger in the remnants.

This cordiality, expressed to friendly visitors, prevails on every side. At the little mission houses the monks see that a traveler's saddle bags are filled with bread, mutton, and a small skin of wine before resuming the journey, and in the humble habitation the best at command is freely offered.

It may be a wretched and gloomy hut, bare of windows, but the family will insist on giving up their bed and blankets, while they retire to some pen outside.

ASSURING THEIR SAFETY.—Zeal in a good cause is good, especially if it be "a zeal according to knowledge." A highway surveyor in Germany was called upon to build a new road. He proceeded with his task in an industrious, methodical manner, and after much labor and painstaking, the road was staked out.

It was Saturday night when part of the work was finished, and before going home the surveyor called upn the mayor of the parish. He explained what he had done, and added—

"I must ask you to see that the poles are not stolen over Sunday."

On Monday morning the surveyor was ready in good season to proceed with his job, but every stake had been carried off. He went in haste to the mayor's house.

"Oh, yes," said that intelligent public functionary; "I had them locked up for safety in the Town Hall!"

PRESENT HAPPINESS.—If any one, instead of wasting his time in repining at unfulfilled desires, will think frequently on the materials he possesses for present happiness, he will be astonished at their richness and number.

Life itself, health, friends, family, the ability to labor, the capacity to enjoy, the power to command certain forms of enjoyment, the beauties of nature, and of art, the delights of affection, the opportunities for improvement, the power of sympathy and of help—these and many other blessings will occur to him who is in search of them. Let him dwell lovingly and gratefully upon these; let him weigh and consider how to make the most of them, *by* neglecting no opportunity and shutting out nothing from his life that can brighten and invigorate it.

SEWAGE ON LAND.—It is said that constant application of sewage will corrupt the land. Experiments over sixty or seventy years, and in some cases for two hundred years, disprove this, as it is found that the sewage deposit is so small in thickness and is distributed so evenly that it at once becomes incorporated with the natural soil and loses all taint; the penetration of the sewage leaves all the solids in the first few inches of porous soil.

There is no more corruption of the land with sewage than with other manures, as experience proves.

Every circle of people met together for any object will prosper largely in proportion to the individuality which each member of it gains in his solitary hours. He must be a man among men; and true manhood can never be fully developed without the influences of society and solitude interacting and mutually benefiting each other.

Benevolent Party—"My man, don't you think fishing is a cruel sport?" Fisherman—"Cruel? Well, I should say so. I have sat here six hours, have not had a bite and am nearly eaten up by mosquitoes."

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No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck.
No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.
No. 4. From ear to ear round the forehead.

TOUPEE AND SCALPS, INCHES.
No. 1. From forehead back as far as bald.
No. 2. Over forehead as far as required.
No. 3. Over the crown of the head.

They have always ready for sale a splendid Stock of Gents' Wigs, Toupees, Ladies' Wigs, Half Wigs, Frizettes, Braids, Curls, etc., beautifully manufactured, and as cheap as any establishment in the Union. Letters from any part of the world will receive attention.

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This preparation has been manufactured and sold at Dollard's for the past fifty years, and its merits are such that, while it has never yet been advertised, the demand for it keeps steadily increasing.

Also Dollard's Regenerative Cream, to be used in conjunction with the Herbanium when the Hair is naturally dry and needs an oil.

Mrs. Edmondson Gorter writes to Messrs Dollard & Co., to send her a bottle of their Herbanium Extract for the Hair. Mrs. Gorter has tried in vain to obtain anything equal to it as a dressing for the hair in England.

MRS. EDMONDSON GORTER,
Oak Lodge Thorpe,
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I have frequently, during a number of years, used the "Dollard's Herbanium Extract," and I do not know of any which equals it as a pleasant, refreshing and healthful cleanser of the hair.

Very respectfully,
LEONARD MYERS,
Ex-Member of Congress, 5th District.

NAVY PAY OFFICE, PHILADELPHIA.

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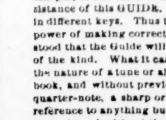

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INSTANTANEOUS GUIDE to the PIANO or ORGAN.

Anyone knowing a tune, either "in the head," as it is called, or able to hum, whistle or sing, can play it WITHOUT ANY PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC OR THE INSTRUMENTS. In fact it may be the first time they have ever seen a piano or organ, yet if they know so much as to whistle or hum a tune—say "Way Down on the Swanee River," for instance—they can play it IMMEDIATELY, correctly and with good effect, on the piano or organ, with the assistance of this GUIDE. THE GUIDE shows how the tunes are to be played with both hands and in different keys. Thus the player has the full effect of the bass and treble clefs, together with the power of making correct and harmonious chords in accompaniments. It must be plainly understood that the Guide will not make an accomplished musician without study. It will do nothing of the kind. What it can do, do well and WITHOUT FAIL is to enable anyone understanding the nature of a tune or air in music to play such tunes or airs, without ever having opened a music book, and without previously needing to know the difference between A or G, a half-note or a quarter-note, a sharp or a flat. The Guide is placed on the instrument, and the player, without reference to anything but what he is shown by it to do, can in a few moments play the piece accurately and without the least trouble. Although it does not and never can supplant regular books of study, it will be of incalculable assistance to the player by "ear" and all others who are their own instructors. By giving the student the power to play IMMEDIATELY twelve tunes of different character—the number of pieces being sent with each Guide—the ear grows accustomed to the sounds, and the fingers used to the position and touch of the keys. So, after a very little practice with the Guide, it will be easy to pick out, almost with the skill and rapidity of the trained player, any air or tune that may be heard or known.

The Guide, we repeat, will not learn how to read the common sheet music. But it will teach those who cannot spend years learning an instrument, how to learn a number of tunes without EITHER PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OR STUDY. A child if it can say its A, B, C's can knows a tune—say "The Sweet Bye and Bye"—can play it, after a few attempts, quite well. There are many who would like to be able to do this, for their own and the amusement of others, and to such we commend The Guide as BOUND TO DO for them ALL WE SAY. Its cheapness and usefulness, moreover, would make it a very good present to give a person, whether young or old, at Christmas. Almost every home in the land has a piano, organ or melodeon, whereon seldom more than one of the family can play. With this Guide in the house everybody can make more or less good use of their instruments.

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Latest Fashion Phases.

The latest French fashions are curious and quaint. For instance, alpaca dresses of gray and brown, with huge scarlet, blue and green velvet sleeves. What could be more "bizarre?"

A few years ago such costumes would be called fancy dress ones. Then there are bolero mantles glittering with gold trimmings not much larger than an immense silk kerchief wrapped around the wearer in mantilla fashion.

At garden parties young ladies wear immense hats and plumes, or gaudy dresses laced up and down the skirt with fancy string lacers, and the coquettish corsage laces upon the right or left side of the wearer.

Most exquisite fabrics are used for these robes. I saw one of yellow "chiffon," with a Lancer drapery of rich yellow silk, bordered with fringe of amber drops.

A costume for the Grand Prix—which always comes on a Sunday (and it generally rains, but every society lady will brave the elements to show her robe, made for the occasion)—was of cream crepe de Chine with bands of gold gimp laid on above the hem of the dress, the sash ends to the skirt decorated with golden tassels.

The large hat was flat in shape and of yellow crepe shirred over a golden frame, while a border of deep filmy lace hung around the border, and feathers of the deepest canary yellow sparkled with diamond dust.

Capotes are airy fantasies. I will give you a recipe for making one. Take two butterflies, pinion one down in front of the hat frame, cover the bonnet with ivy leaves (they are prettiest green and quite natural looking), put a large butterfly to the back of the crown and add two narrow strings—you have only to tie—and le voila the bonnet!

A pretty opera cloak will be more difficult to obtain. The gold brocade ones reach just below the waist, there are no sleeves, but a sleeve piece standing high up on the shoulders and a deep frill of lace goes all around the garment.

The Duchess evening shoe is of green satin and has golden heels; the prettiest house shoe is made of bronze, tied on the instep with scarlet velvet. The Dorothy slipper is of magnolia green, and there is a nameless shoe exhibited at a St. Honore shop, of a peculiar shade of red, laced up the front in such a manner as to show a dainty lace hose. Two tones of color in one dress must find favor, as it is the mode. Sleeves are laced at the side or at the wrist. Embroideries become more expensive and elaborate. Black grenadine is woven with intricate flowers and intended to be worn with bright sashes.

"Acolinne" is a fabric resembling poplin and the shades of old pink or of cedarwood pink are most desirable.

The Paris cape has a shirt front in green velvet covered with gimp work in various shades of "Cophophore." The sleeves of lace touch the elbow, and tassel ornaments droop at each side. The parasols for the race, the Grand Prix, are most elaborate. Poppies and cornflowers ramble upon white crepe, and the handle is entirely covered by a huge bow. Green crepe finds an affinity with yellow silk, and black lace fluted over a skeleton frame has an immense bow of scarlet velvet.

The heedless are of horseshoe knots with glittering steel nail-heads or round crystal knobs, in which demure Waltham clock faces peep.

I can't say watches; they are so open-faced, large and cheap. I am told that the hats and fans will be bedecked with flowers and that the robes worn will be gay enough for a dinner or ball occasion.

The most exquisite robe will be worn by the artists of the theatre. A bet is now made at the Jockey Club that Blanche Pierson, of the Comedie Francaise, will have the most correct turn-out and most handsome robe.

Jewelry is really going out of date and is not used in the Summer season. Old seal rings can be purchased very cheaply, and to be in fashion one single tiny ring appears on the little finger.

When I say out of date, I mean for personal use, and is used instead on the robes or even the bonnet, but the hands are free and the bangles no longer shackle the wrists.

Anklets are new; they are gold bracelets which clasp around the ankle, and garters are of solid gold bands, really comfortable for the wearer.

Since Dame Grundy whispered that the Duke of Edinburg wears a tiny golden bracelet high above the elbow, ladies are inducing their betrothed lovers to have one made and worn, which, in case of a "mal entendu," is never to be cast aside, but remain a fixture.

I heard this gossip from Boucheron, the jeweler in the Palais Royal, who furnishes royalty with all their diamonds and precious stones, and he showed me a least a dozen to choose from.

They are made with three springs, so as not to retard the movement of the arm, and fasten with a padlock and key, or are riveted on the arm. Why not handcuffs?

Narrow velvets are employed for neck bands, and at the back they are pinned in a V shape with a tiny caterpillar or a small June bug.

One of the newest ways of making a skirt is to plest it in two or three wide single pleats turning towards the front, and beginning where the fulness of the back ends.

From the constant use at present of double-width materials, most of the skirts look as if they were pleated up from one uncut piece, which indeed is really the case.

But this will make dressmaking at home rather more difficult, as the draping requires quite a trained and skilful hand.

But now that the dress-stands are so moderate in price, this difficulty should be reduced to a minimum, and ready made skirts can be purchased at such a cheap rate that the bodices seem to be of more importance.

The newest sleeves show no idea of lessening in size at the shoulder, and they increase in tightness at the elbow, and down to the wrist are often so tight as to need buttoning up, to allow the arm space to enter.

Of course with mantles and jackets there is much discomfort, but to that we shall have to get accustomed, as I hear that all our cottons and thin silks are to be made in this style, and that it is not improbable that the sleeves of cotton gowns will be of soft silks, and the sleeves of the surahs and pongees of velvet.

The newest sleeves are cut in one, not an upper or an under, but a shape that looks like a very ancient *gigot*, or "leg of mutton sleeve."

Most of the newest sleeves have the full side, mounted on a plain lining, so that the folds can be easily made to sit gracefully by tacking them down with invisible stitches. Bodices have not such pronounced peaks in front as they had, some of them being quite of the "basque" order.

There are many bodices full in front and full behind, and fastening under the left arm, being buttoned round the armhole and up the shoulder, the band of the dress buttoning there likewise. The seamless bodices and polonaises are likely to be a great success, and are very becoming to slight figures. They are rather troublesome to make, however, and should be cut on the bias.

Amongst the new revivals are spotted materials; not the large spots that were worn a few years ago, but small ones not larger than a sixpence, which are generally accompanied by some other pattern, such as *Chine* flowers; rings of various shapes, round or oval, and spots and stripes are found in combination. Plaids are to be found both in woollen materials and cottons, the latter especially in zephyrs.

The plaids measure about two inches in size, and are of the brightest colors, several colors being mixed together. Such bright hues were never seen, I think, mixed together in cottons before the appearance of this summer's materials.

Then there are indistinct plaids of very pale hues in cottons, and also the bordered materials, lace and embroidery imitations, as well as braiding, which have been used in woollens, and are produced in cottons.

The surahs and other soft silks seem to be generally in floral designs with lines; white designs on colors being the rule.

Odds and Ends.

ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS OF INTEREST.

Chocolate Biscuits.—Whisk the whites of two eggs to a stiff froth; mix in lightly two and a half ounces of grated chocolate, one and a half ounce of fine flour, and one ounce of caster sugar. Drop the mixture in small heaps on a sheet of paper, and bake for a few minutes in a brisk oven.

Stuffing for Roast Hare.—Two ounces of beef suet finely chopped, three ounces of bread-crumbs, one tablespoonful altogether of thyme, parsley, bay leaves, a little basil and marjoram—all finely chopped; season with pepper and salt, and moisten with three eggs. Fasten a well greased paper over the hare before roasting it, and that will prevent its becoming hard on the outside: and it should be basted very frequently when cooking.

Savory Fish Pudding.—Boil four or five eggs hard and cut into slices. Prepare some white sauce with fish-stock or with water, flour, butter or cream, a good squeeze of lemon juice, and some chopped parsley, a little pepper and salt. Lay some slices of egg in the bottom of a pie dish, pour over them some maitre-d'hotel sauce, place a layer of cold remains of white fish above the eggs, then again a layer of eggs and sauce, and so on in alternate layers till the dish is full. Cover with pastry or a pie-dish cover and bake. When the pudding is cooked, have ready some hot maitre-d'hotel sauce, remove the crust or cover, and mask the top with the sauce.

Tapioca Fruit Pudding.—One half-cup of tapioca soaked overnight in one quart of cold water. In the morning cover the bottom of the baking-dish with any kind of fruit either bottled or fresh; sweeten the tapioca with one half-cup of sugar, add a little salt and nutmeg, pour over the fruit, and bake one hour. Serve with sauce.

Sweetbreads.—Parboil the sweetbreads and let them get cold; then cut them into pieces about three-quarters of an inch thick, dip them in the yolk of an egg, then in some fine bread-crumbs—spice, lemon peel, and sweet herbs may be added. Put some butter into a frying-pan; when it boils, put in the sweetbreads and fry them a fine brown. Garnish with parsley, and serve with mushroom or tomato ketchup, or melted butter.

Tomato Marmalade.—Peel ripe tomatoes, cut them into small pieces, and boil till well done; rub through a sieve, and add one cup of sugar for each cup of tomatoes. Boil forty minutes, then pour into small jars.

Sheep's Head.—Bone the head and take out the brains and put them both into strong salt and water for a day or two, changing the water twice a day. Then take the head out of the water and rinse it well, tie it up in a cloth, put it into a saucepan, cover it with cold water, add plenty of sliced vegetables, a bunch of herbs, a few peppercorns, and a little salt. Let the water come to the boil gently, and be careful to remove any scum that may rise to the top; let the head simmer gently from two and a half to three hours. When the head is quite tender, take it up, remove the cloth, lay the head flat on a dish, season it with pepper, a little finely-chopped eschalot, and parsley. Place another dish on the top with a weight on it, and let the head remain until quite cold; then cut it into pieces about two inches long and half an inch wide, dip them in outier, and fry till a nice golden color.

Turnip Puree.—Take six large turnips, peel, slice thin, and boil in salted water until sufficiently cooked; then drain in a colander, and afterwards rub through a fine sieve. Place the pulp thus obtained in a saucepan, mix with it a tablespoonful of flour, a seasoning of salt, pepper, and grated nutmeg, a good slice of butter, and a teacupful of rich milk. Stir over the fire until thoroughly hot, then serve as required—say, with beef or mutton.

Bacon and Potatoes Cornish Way.—Cut the rashers of bacon rather small; fry them as usual, tossing in with them at the last some roughly-chopped cold potatoes, till the latter are quite hot and browned. Another way is to fry the bacon, remove it from the pan, and fry in the latter some roughly-chopped potatoes; pile them on a hot dish, brown with a hot shovel or in front of the fire, and serve with the rashers on the top. In both cases the potatoes should be highly seasoned with pepper and salt.

Bread-and-Apple-Pudding.—Butter a tin kettle or mould; cover the bottom with slices of stale buttered bread; cover this with tart apples cut in thin slices, with a grating of nutmeg or a little cinnamon; then add another layer of bread and apples, and so continue until you have the mould two-thirds full. Cover it and stand it in a kettle with sufficient boiling water to steam for one hour. Serve with caramel sauce made thus. Put a cup of milk, an ounce of chocolate, a half-cup of brown sugar, and two tablespoonfuls of golden sirup on to boil; boil and stir until about the thickness of table sirup; take from the fire, add a teaspoonful of vanilla, and serve hot. This also makes a delicious sauce for apple-dumplings.

Macaroni a l'Italienne.—Stew the macaroni slowy in broth, and then mix it with a good puree of tomatoes seasoned with red pepper and a small quantity of chillies.

Hedgehog Cake.—Scald and peel a quarter of a pound of sweet-almonds, cut them into spikes lengthwise; place a large stale sponge-cake in a glass dish, and stick the almonds all round to the edge of the dish, about one inch apart. Make a custard of the yolks of three eggs and half a pint of milk; sweeten, and flavor with a few drops of almond; pour into the dish.

Turkey-Eggs.—The egg of the turkey excels all others for all culinary purposes, making most delicious custards and cakes.

Confidential Correspondents.

DORA.—If the young gentleman really wants to make your acquaintance in a proper manner, he will not hesitate to have an introduction to your friends.

P. M.—To cleanse gold lace, prepare a strong soap-lather by boiling one ounce of yellow soap in one quart of water and well stirring till dissolved. Add a tea-spoonful of turpentine, and dip and work the lace in it while as hot as the hand will bear; then rinse in hot water and dry.

REB.—The sparrow is said to hatch out from four to five broods in a season, with an average of about five birds in a nest; and and ingenious individual has calculated that under the most favorable conditions the progeny of a pair of sparrows would in ten years amount to over 25,000,000 birds.

A. C. M.—Buying new pieces is always rather expensive work; for clever girls master very hard music at first sight nowadays. Try to exchange acquaintance with one or two other pupils, and contrive an exchange, so that a few of you may buy different pieces, and thus gain a variety of practice.

J. C. H.—A little powdered potash thrown into rat holes will drive away the rodents that are so annoying in cellar or kitchen; cayenne pepper will have the same effect on rats and cockroaches, and a mouse will never gnaw through a piece of cotton sprinkled with cayenne that is stuffed into his hole.

ROMANCE.—Nothing is absolutely forgotten, unless the memory is impaired by years or some physical cause, as sometimes happens. The passionate love you speak of may die, and you may come to laugh at your folly in connection with it, but the image of the person will not be wholly effaced from your mind.

RABBETH.—1. There is no set age for young people to begin to think of each other as lovers; the event must depend on so many things. 2. There is no harm in a gentleman escorting you home from any place, if it is with your parents' knowledge and approval. No young girl should speak to a man who is not acquainted with her friends.

READER.—The six breeds of turkeys in the United States are known as the bronze, the Narragansett, white, black, buff, slate. The largest of the bronze turkeys, raised principally in Rhode Island and North Stonington, in Connecticut, attain forty-five pounds in weight when two years old. The yearlings, more tender, usually weigh about twenty-five pounds. The Narragansets are nearly as large.

NIGIMA.—A very simple method of inducing sleep in cases of persistent insomnia, and one that has succeeded where many drugs have failed, is simply to administer a moderate amount of warm liquid food before the patient goes to bed. This diverts the blood from the brain to the abdominal organs and takes away the cerebral excitement that precludes sleep.

E. HOWARD.—You are doing wrong to keep on scraping the deformed nail that came after the accident to your finger. Leave it alone; only just trimming the edge with sharp scissors when it gets too long, and it will, in time, assume a better shape. If it threatens to grow into the flesh at the side, you should apply to your nearest hospital, and the doctor there will soon rectify the condition.

ONE SOLICITING.—Do not think about yourself. Take our word for it that the people who you think are criticizing you have quite sufficient to do if they mind their own business. You should quietly criticize them, and thus relieve your own mind. Do not try to say anything clever. People of moderate ability become popular and very charming if they always endeavor to say what is kind. Cleverness counts for very little.

M. E. E. asks:—"What is Lethe? I received a letter from a friend, who writes, 'I think you have drunk of the waters of Lethe, so far as I am concerned.' What did he mean?" He meant that you had forgotten him. Lethe is one of the fabled rivers of the Hades of mythology. The souls of the departed drank of this river of oblivion and forgot all they had lived through—the joy and sorrow, the love and hate of the world above.

F. W. H.—Mouth gum or glue is essentially good gelatine, with a little sugar or glycerine added to keep it easily soluble. A good gum which keeps for a fair time if well corked when not in use is easily made from gum-arabic, dissolved in water, well settled, poured off from chips, &c., and a drop or two of oil of cloves added to prevent mildew. The following is also first-rate: Glue, best pale, two pounds, water one quart; soak in the cold water twenty-four hours, and then heat in a stoneware pot in a saucepan of boiling water. When all dissolved, add nitric acid sp. gr 1·2357 ounce. When cold bottle for use.

ZERO.—1. The war-game you have seen advertised is like a very learned and elaborate caricature of chess. The pieces represent infantry, cavalry, artillery, engineers, and so forth; the numbers are arbitrarily attached to each piece, and the movements represent marches, charges, processes of entrenchment, and so forth. One officer plants infantry and guns on a spot supposed to represent a hill; an attacking force holds the defenders of the entrenchments on the front, while other pieces are moved so as to represent a turning movement. The umpires take note of each player's dispositions, and they score points just as the judges do in sparring matches. If one officer allows overwhelming numbers to be concentrated against a weak place in his lines, that gives a mark against him, and so on. The game is very pretty; but we do not think much of its practical value.

VERITAS.—Such quarrels are not unusual; and you seem to have been none too prudent. When a girl of eighteen finds that her father intends to marry again, she is not likely to feel very friendly towards the proposed stepmother. Knowing, as you did, that the man had grown-up children, you should have ceased visiting him. Every kindness that you showed to the boy and girl was doubtless misunderstood; and the scandalmongers of course declared that you were laying traps for the poor innocent man. Somehow or other an elderly widower who goes out of his way to thrust his attention on a lady is always described as a harmless deluded lamb, while the woman to whom he pays court is a designing Jezebel. Then the children are converted into objects of pity; and, if the unhappy woman is finally tempted into marriage, she is probably ostracised for a time by all the neighbors, while her step-children lead her a troublesome life. Do not think of the man any more; he is only an elderly flirt—and we do not know of any more detestable creature. You have wasted much time; try to secure the remainder of your life from misery.